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**ARMS DEALS: THE RUSSIAN PIPELINE**

**COVID CHALLENGE: WORRY FOR SCHOOLS**

**E-SCOOTY: SALES REV UP**

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SEPTEMBER 13, 2021 ₹75

# INDIA TODAY

From left: Ekta Kapoor *of ALTBalaji*, Monika Shergill *of Netflix*, Aparna Purohit *of Amazon Prime Video*

# *Begums of Binge*

**THE POWERFUL WOMEN HEADING OTT PLATFORMS WHO ARE DRIVING THE STREAMING REVOLUTION IN ENTERTAINMENT ACROSS INDIAN HOMES AMIDST THE PANDEMIC**

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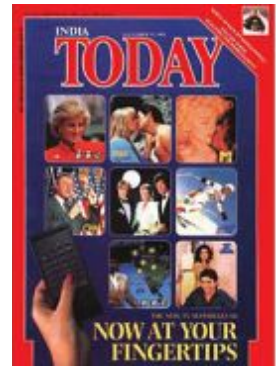
VISIT…

FROM THE

# EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

The May 31, 1984, INDIA TODAY issue, 'Big Budget Survivors', featured three of Bollywood's most successful personalities on the cover—producer-directors Manmohan Desai and Prakash Mehra and superstar Amitabh Bachchan. The trio epitomised the unchallenged dominance of the world's largest film industry with big-budget movies and glitzy sets. Television was still finding its feet, and mobile phones and the internet were in their infancy. Nearly four decades later, a convergence of 4G connectivity, smartphones, smart TVs and tailor-made content has fuelled a new Indian entertainment explosion—from gangsters in small-town UP to messy urban romances, women battling misogyny and period dramas. All of these shows are streamed through the internet and into your smartphones, laptops, tablets and smart TVs ('over the top' of another platform, hence, OTT). Viewers are caught in an entertainment whirlpool of the kind we saw after the advent of satellite TV and soap operas nearly three decades ago.



November 15, 1992

July 17, 2000

OTT viewership nearly tripled last year after the pandemic-induced lockdowns shuttered movie theatres and confined Indians to their homes. A March 2021 EY-FICCI report says OTT subscribers surged from 10.5 million in 2019 to 28 million in 2020.

When OTT arrived in India, it was mainly known for global content—Hollywood movies and binge-worthy shows like *House of Cards*, *Narcos* and *Game of Thrones*. The addition of local content has sparked off pan-India popularity and the rise of unlikely stars—from Manoj Bajpayee to Pankaj Tripathi—and shows like *Sacred Games*, *The Family Man*, *Mirzapur* and *Special Ops*. India has over 40 OTT platforms, with more rushing in to cash in on the boom. It is estimated that they produced 1,200 hours of original content in 2020 and this is expected to double to 3,000 hours per year by 2023. It is also estimated that the OTT platforms will invest $1 billion (about Rs 7,300 crore) on content in 2021. This phenomenon captures the zeitgeist of the times. The number of smartphone users in India is projected to reach 760 million in 2021, second only to China. Surprisingly, screen size does not seem to matter as 70 per cent of India watches video content on the mobile. Add to that the falling prices of smart TVs. With internet data in India among the cheapest, many people gave up cable TV connections to spur a new generation of 'cord nevers'.

OTT offers an embarrassment of riches with its variety of content catering to every taste, gender and generation. Language, too, is no bar. Watching dubbed or subtitled shows is already an integral part of the viewing habit. It is predicted that by 2025, regional language consumption will cross 50 per cent of the total time spent on OTT platforms and the next growth will come from Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities. The boom in online viewership has created a tsunami of creativity. The biggest names in Bollywood now want to produce content for OTT, and even the big film stars are riding the wave. This has created a new grammar for content creation as it aims to encourage binge-watching. Some of the cutting-edge content is pushing boundaries and there have been demands for content regulation since they don't come under the censorship board. The industry is getting organised to comply with this.

Netflix, Amazon Prime Video and ALTBalaji, three among the popular OTT platforms, have released over 150 web shows and 90 films in a span of four years. Interestingly, their creative departments are all headed by women. The troika—Aparna Purohit, Head of India Originals at Amazon Prime Video; Monika Shergill, Vice-President, Content, at Netflix; and Ekta Kapoor, Joint Managing Director of Balaji Telefilms, is changing the kind of content Indians are consuming. For one, these power ladies are sitting on piles of cash the likes of which their film producer contemporaries could only dream of. Every day they are overwhelmed by pitches from those wishing to produce content for them.

Our cover story, 'Begums of Binge', written by Senior Editor Suhani Singh, documents this tectonic shift. Shergill, Kapoor and Purohit came together for the first time at Group Photo Editor Bandeep Singh's cover photoshoot. Shergill spoke of the booming OTT repertoire—"the sheer number of projects in development, the zest in writing, so much more work and space for voices to come in, both experienced and new." That's good news for all of us. Happy watching! ■

*(Aroon Purie)*

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*Photograph by* BANDEEP SINGH

COVER STORY

## BEGUMS OF BINGE

**The powerful women heading the OTT channels are driving the streaming revolution in entertainment across Indian homes amidst the pandemic**

On the cover: *Photograph by* **BANDEEP SINGH**
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INDIA TODAY MAGAZINE INSIGHT

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*by Ashish Misra*

The party's minority cell is hardselling the welfare work done for Muslims by the Centre and the Yogi Adityanath government

https://bit.ly/2WJm6hF

### Why Naveen Patnaik's Health Card scheme is a game changer for women in Odisha

*by Romita Datta*

The scheme provides for a yearly medical assistance of Rs 5 lakh for beneficiary families, with an additional Rs 5 lakh cover for women

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### Why Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan might not affect Kashmir *by Moazum Mohammad*

The Taliban have so far focused on ruling Afghanistan. However, their takeover could embolden Pakistan-based terror groups to step up activity in the Valley

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### How shooter Avani Lekhara beat all odds to win gold at Tokyo Paralympics *by Rohit Parihar*

The 19-year-old did not let the restrictions of the Covid lockdown upset her plans and even trained from her home

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### Why electrocution is becoming a leading cause of death of elephants in India

More and more of India's dwindling elephant herds are coming into conflict with urban dangers

*by Jeemon Jacob*

https://bit.ly/3zAl1aj

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# UPFRONT

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**CHOCK-A-BLOCK** A crowded street in Kozhikode, Kerala, following the easing of lockdown, July 2021

C. K THANSEER/GETTY IMAGES

COVID-19

# BRACING FOR THE THIRD WAVE

By Sonali Acharjee

On August 29, India reported 43,000 new cases. It should have been a day of relief, considering only three and a half months ago the country was clocking over 400,000 new cases daily. However, health experts remain concerned by the pandemic situation, particularly since 67 per cent of the new cases added on August 29 came from just one state—Kerala. Today, at 209,520, the state has the highest number of active infections in India. Maharashtra, which was for many months the leading state for new infections, has now only a quarter of Kerala's active infections. Kerala's numbers are all the more shocking when you compare them to some of the northern states, such as Delhi (375 active cases), Rajasthan (109) and Uttar Pradesh (269).

"There are pockets in the country that remain sus-

**SURF'S UP** Crowds gathered on Mumbai's Juhu Beach, August 2021

MILIND SHELTE

ceptible to the virus," says Dr K. Srinath Reddy, chairman, Public Health Foundation of India (PHFI). However, letting these pockets have a continued high infectivity rate does pose a risk to the overall management of the pandemic. A new variant or a high number of long Covid cases could once again overwhelm the country's medical infrastructure.

## WHY DO RISING CASES IN KERALA MATTER?

"It is worrying to have such a high number of cases in just one state," says vaccine expert Dr Gagandeep Kang. The reason, most experts believe, is Kerala's lowered seropositivity. The latest national survey showed that only 44 per cent of the state's population had immunity against Covid. In states like Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and Rajasthan, seropositivity is above 70 per cent.

The state reported an average of 13,500 daily new cases in July and 19,500 in August. The test confirmation percentage also remains high (over 15 per cent)—a sign of widespread transmission. However, over 50 per cent of hospital beds are currently empty, as per state data, and the mortality rate is only 0.5 per cent, half the national 1.3 per cent. This means that while people are testing positive, they aren't experiencing severe symptoms. "It is a result of the state having vaccinated a fair share of people. The current vaccines may not prevent infection but are effective in stopping the disease from progressing to pneumonia and other health complications," says Dr Subhash Chandra, internal medicine specialist at Amrita Hospital, Kochi.

Kerala has fully vaccinated over 20 per cent of its eligible population and 52 per cent (which includes 70 per cent of those over 45 years) have received a single dose. Despite this, the state has recorded around 80,000 Covid cases among those who have received the first dose of a vaccine and 40,000 cases among those fully vaccinated. Initially, this did spark fears of a new variant of Covid in the country, but the Indian SARS-CoV-2 Consortium on Genomics (INSACOG) ruled this out in August: "Vaccination breakthroughs (or infections after two vaccine doses) are common during Delta outbreaks and are expected in India as well. Concern regarding appearance of new variants should be calibrated in the context of such data. As of now, sequencing of vaccination breakthroughs in India is also showing a very high proportion of Delta variant," INSACOG wrote in its statement. In other words, the surge in Kerala is still due to the Delta variant.

But if the virus is allowed to transmit unchecked, there could be a risk of new future mutations. "Simply preventing deaths will not stop the pandemic," says virologist Dr Shahid Jameel. As people get pandemic-weary, they are letting their guard down which could lead to more contagious strains of the virus. "Covid stands the chance to mutate every time it transmits," says genome specialist Dr Rakesh Mishra.

The Centre has taken steps to address the situation in Kerala. On July 29, a six-member team headed by Dr Sujeet Singh, director of the National Centre for Disease Control (NCDC), was sent to the state, to take stock of the situation and recommend necessary public health interventions. The team revealed that there was significant pandemic fatigue in the state and lax home isolation. On August 28, Union health secretary Rajesh Bhushan wrote to Kerala chief minister Pinarayi Vijayan: "All 14 districts in Kerala have been identified as districts of concern due to high test positivity rates and high cases per million reported in the past four weeks." He asked the state to ramp up testing and follow Covid-19 protocol strictly. Kerala has also been asked to send more samples for genomic sequencing from high transmission districts to catch any new strains. "I would like to reiterate that any laxity in ensuring the five-fold strategy of 'test, track, treat, vaccinate and ensure Covid-appropriate behaviour' may result in further surge in the state," wrote Bhushan in the letter.

## A GRIM PICTURE

**210,000**
Number of active infections in Kerala; highest in the country

**46%**
of national breakthrough infections from Kerala

**10%**
Average test positivity rate in Kerala for over 2 months

**44%**
of Kerala's population have Covid antibodies

### WILL THIS LEAD TO A NATIONAL THIRD WAVE?

It is certain that numbers will rise as a significant chunk of India still hasn't been exposed to the virus or vaccinated against it. But most experts remain sceptical about another wave being as disastrous as the second one, particularly in the absence of a new strain. "Sero-surveillance shows about two-thirds of Indians are already exposed to the virus. There will be localised outbreaks where there is less exposure," says Jameel. India has currently fully vaccinated 11 per cent of its adult population and 37 per cent have received at least one dose.

The latest assessment by Niti Aayog points out that a possible third wave of the pandemic, which could result in as many as 400,000-500,000 country-wide infections daily, will need 200,000 dedicated intensive care unit (ICU) beds nationally to deal with a 23 per cent projected hospitalisation rate. States have been asked to prepare accordingly. "A lot of what will happen also hinges on the entry of any new Covid strain," says All India Institute of Medical Sciences director Dr Randeep Guleria.

But when will this wave hit? A ministry of home affairs' (MHA) expert panel recently predicted that the third wave could hit the country any time between September and October. It used mathematical modelling by a group of IIT Kanpur scientists who had accurately predicted the peak of the second wave. The MHA report has three predictions: as per scenario one, the third wave could peak in October with 320,000 positive cases per day; in scenario two, with the emergence of new and more virulent variants, the third wave could peak in September with likely 500,000 positive cases per day; and as per scenario three, the third wave could peak in late October with 200,000 positive cases per day.

### WILL COVID-19 BECOME ENDEMIC IN INDIA?

If India is entering a state of endemicity, as was suggested recently by World Health Organization chief scientist Dr Soumya Swaminathan, it is important that new strains be controlled. To be in an endemic stage means that the virus is consistently present but with low to moderate infections happening in various pockets where vaccination or antibodies are low—similar to what is happening at present. "If enough people have immunity against the virus, it might cause symptoms in small pockets but it won't cause the disease. It is not possible to know when this will happen," says Dr Reddy. However, this will not be possible if the virus continues to get chances to mutate.

There is already a new threat on the horizon. South Africa's National Institute for Communicable Diseases and the KwaZulu-Natal Research Innovation and Sequencing Platform has set global alarm bells ringing with its new analysis of the C.1.2 variant. Scientists discovered that the new strain has more mutations than the original Covid-19 strain that emerged from Wuhan, China, compared to all other variants of concern (VOC) or variants of interest (VOI) detected across the world so far. The study says the mutation rate (41.8 mutations per year) of the C.1.2 variant is almost twice as fast as the global mutation rate shown currently by other variants. This strain has been confirmed in countries like China, England, New Zealand, Portugal, Switzerland, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mauritius. Experts say it is only a matter of time before it reaches India. The strain also has some mutations in common with the Delta variant which could help it escape antibodies built up against other Covid strains. In Israel, even with 60 per cent vaccination, the Delta variant has continued to infect people.

INSACOG has so far sequenced 67,699 samples of the virus from India. An additional 11,016 sequences of samples have been shared by states. This is only a paltry 0.002 per cent of those infected by Covid in India. It is crucial that strain monitoring is increased significantly alongside containment measures to keep transmission low if India is to manage sustained endemicity. ■

MANDAR DEODHAR

BJP-SHIV SENA SPAT

# BATTLE ZONE MUMBAI

**By Kiran D. Tare**

The cold war between the BJP and Shiv Sena is likely to escalate as elections near for the 15 major municipal corporations in Maharashtra, including Mumbai. The friends-turned-foes are busy scoring points against each other at a time when the state still faces a crisis on the Covid-19 pandemic front.

The ruling Shiv Sena fired the first salvo when the Maharashtra police arrested Narayan Rane, the Union minister for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSME), on August 24 in Ratnagiri for allegedly making derogatory remarks against chief minister Uddhav Thackeray. The district judge in Raigad sent him to judicial custody but granted bail the same night. The ex-Sena strongman and former Maharashtra chief minister, who joined the BJP in 2019, had embarked on a 10 day-long 'Jan Ashirwad Yatra' from Mumbai to Sindhudurg on August 18. On August 23, while talking to reporters in Mahad (Raigad district), he had mocked Thackeray for being ignorant about the country's 75th year of independence. "While delivering his speech, he (Thackeray) turned to the chief secretary and asked which Independence Day it was. If I had been there, I would have given him a tight slap," were Rane's exact comments.

Relations between the Shiv Sena and BJP have hit a new low since then. In a rare show of violent indignation, Sena workers pelted stones at the BJP office in Nashik. All over the state, Sena workers have also put up hoardings calling Rane '*kombdi chor* (chicken thief)', a belittling term they use for the Union minister since he used to run a chicken shop in his younger days in Mumbai. In retaliation, BJP workers have put up hoardings in the city calling Thackeray a '*ghar kombda*' (homebody). This is the first high-profile incident involving the two estranged partners since 2018 when Uddhav had remarked that Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath of the BJP should be smacked with chappals for not removing his footwear while garlanding a Chhatrapati Shivaji statue in Lucknow. The issue had been sorted but now BJP workers have filed cases against the Shiv Sena chief in

**TRADING SLAPS**
Shiv Sena and BJP workers clashed outside Narayan Rane's residence in Juhu, Aug. 24

Nashik and Pune, three years after the alleged offensive remark. The party has also started a campaign to send 75,000 letters to "remind" Thackeray about India's 75th independence anniversary celebrations.

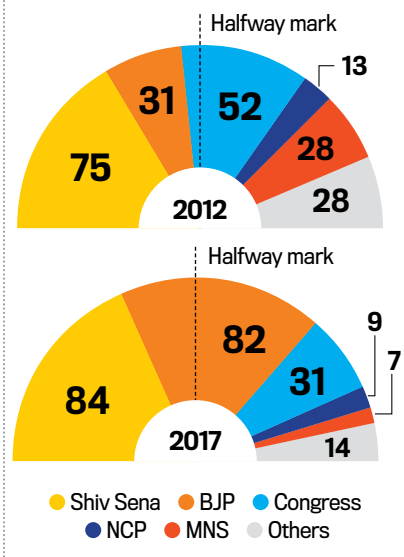
Adding fuel to the fire, Rane, on August 28, threatened to expose certain 'dirty dealings' in the Sena's past. "Why was Ramesh More killed? Who planned Jaya (Jaywant) Jadhav's murder? Who wanted to throw acid on the face of his sister-in-law? I know all the answers, and I will reveal them at the right time," the former Shiv Sena No. 2 said while addressing an audience in Sindhudurg, his home district. More and Jadhav were Shiv Sena legislators when they were murdered in early 2000, and after all these years there's still no clarity on the motive. The 'sister-in-law' comment has kept the gossip mills churning but nothing more.

Meanwhile, the Centre has waded into the fight with the Enforcement Directorate sending a notice to transport minister Anil Parab, a trusted lieutenant of Thackeray, on August 29, in connection with the case of alleged extortion from bar owners in Mumbai. The dismissed assistant police inspector, Sachin Vaze, had reportedly named Parab as a conduit in the Rs 100 crore monthly extortion business. The ED has now asked Parab to appear at its Mumbai office to explain the finances of his luxury resort in Dapoli, Ratnagiri. On August 30, the ED also conducted raids at the offices of Bhavna Gawli, the Shiv Sena MP from Yavatmal-Washim, in connection with alleged unaccounted for real estate owned by her.

At the core of the feud is the fight for control of the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC), the richest civic body in Asia. Its annual budget for 2021-22 is Rs 39,039 crore, more than that of many Indian states.

## THE BMC POWER SURGE

Total seats: **227**




**₹ 39,039 cr.**
**BMC budget for 2021-22**

**NARAYAN RANE IS THE BJP'S POINT MAN IN ITS FIGHT FOR THE VOTES OF THE MARATHI-SPEAKING LOWER MIDDLE CLASS**

The BMC elections are due early next year and the BJP is looking to end the supremacy of the Shiv Sena, which has controlled the corporation since 1997.

Rane has been the BJP's best bet so far in its fight for the votes of the Marathi-speaking lower middle class. A BJP strategist feels Rane could influence the vote of Konkan natives settled in Mumbai even though in the past he's been accused of instigating violence against the community. The party had fallen only two seats short of the Shiv Sena's tally of 84 in the 2017 BMC polls but failed to make inroads in Sena-dominated areas like Parel, Lalbaug and Byculla. "Rane will be our point man in these areas. If we win central Mumbai, we can end the Thackeray era in the BMC," a BJP strategist says.

The BJP has taken a big gamble by promoting Rane. Political analyst Hemant Desai says the otherwise scattered Sena sympathisers could unite if the BJP promotes Rane aggressively. Sena spokesperson Arvind Sawant says Rane has lost all credibility. "What the BJP is doing is the politics of revenge. Mumbaikars have full faith in Shiv Sena's politics of development," says Sawant, the Lok Sabha MP from South Mumbai which includes Parel and Byculla.

Meanwhile, Mumbai Congress president Ashok 'Bhai' Jagtap has announced that the party will contest the BMC elections independently. Along with the split in votes of the ruling Maharashtra Vikas Aghadi (MVA) alliance, the BJP also plans to prop up the Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS), an arch rival of the Shiv Sena, in a few seats. The BJP and MNS are likely to have a tacit pact in the Sena-dominated areas. "Power in the BMC is like oxygen for Uddhav Thackeray. The BJP will try its best to put the Shiv Sena on ventilator," says Desai.

Uddhav has not yet shown his cards for the BMC election. He has been keeping a close watch on two major infrastructure projects, the coastal road that connects south and north Mumbai and the Andheri-Dahisar patch of the metro line. A Shiv Sena insider says Thackeray expects a helping hand from ally Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) to break into the minority votes. However, as the minority votes are divided among the Congress, AIMIM, Samajwadi Party and NCP, Thackeray's best hope is still the Marathi-speaking lower middle class, the core voters of the Shiv Sena. ■

*Graphic by* TANMOY CHAKRABORTY

PUNJAB

# FROM BAD TO WORSE

By Anilesh S. Mahajan

On August 30, a day after meeting Rahul Gandhi at his residence in New Delhi, Congress general secretary Harish Rawat, in charge of the party's affairs in Punjab, partially walked back his earlier statement on August 25 that the Punjab Congress would go to polls under the leadership of Chief Minister Amarinder Singh. Instead, he noted that the Congress has many well-known leaders in the state, "[including] Punjab Pradesh Congress Committee (PCC) chief Navjot Singh Sidhu". However, Rawat has also conveyed the party high command's displeasure with the Sidhu camp's outbursts. He travelled to Chandigarh on August 31 and met with Sidhu and his camp; on September 1, he was to meet with the chief minister and his loyalists.

Given the animosity between the Amarinder and Sidhu camps, uncertain pronouncements like these have created many problems for the Congress in Punjab, leaving it unclear where the party leadership stands on the fight between the two state leaders. The squabble has even complicated the strategy for the assembly polls to be held in February next year, alongside polls in Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Manipur and Goa. At the moment, the Congress' state unit looks to be in disarray. Over the past four months, the battle between the Amarinder and Sidhu camps has damaged the party's standing, even helping revitalise the Akali Dal and the BJP.

To roll out an effective campaign, the Congress urgently needs to set its house in order. The problem is finding a way to keep Sidhu and Amarinder on the same page and to keep the aggressive Sidhu in check. Just over a month ago, on July 23, Sidhu—with the apparent support of Rahul and Priyanka Gandhi—was installed as state PCC chief, despite Amarinder Singh's opposition to the decision. Now, four cabinet ministers allied with Sidhu—Tript Rajinder Bajwa, Sukhjinder Randhawa, Charanjit Channi and Sukhwinder Sarkaria—along with the state unit's newly appointed general secretary (organisation) Pargat Singh, a Sidhu loyalist, have demanded the removal of Amarinder Singh as chief minister. This followed the same script that earlier saw Sidhu seeking the ouster of the chief minister and being rewarded with an appointment as Punjab PCC chief. This time, Amarinder was better prepared.

**THE BATTLE BETWEEN THE AMARINDER AND SIDHU CAMPS HAS DAMAGED THE CONGRESS IN PUNJAB**

On August 10, the chief minister met party chief Sonia Gandhi to discuss the political situation. On August 24, the dissident leaders had camped in Delhi to meet Rahul Gandhi, only to be diverted by national general secretary (organisation), K.C. Venugopal to meet Harish Rawat in Dehradun. The dissidents say Amarinder has failed to deliver on emotive issues like the alleged instances of the desecration of the Guru Granth Sahib in 2015 and the subsequent police firing on protesters. They also accuse him of failing to crack down on the drug mafias, of going easy on monopolistic business syndicates and even of collusion with the Shiromani Akali Dal.

These leaders are no fans of Sidhu, but are rumoured to have shifted their loyalties from Amarinder to Sidhu after receiving assurances from senior Congressmen in New Delhi. Most of

ANI

**POWER PLAYERS**
Punjab chief minister Captain Amarinder Singh (centre-left) with PCC chief Navjot Singh Sidhu

them don't have a future outside the Congress and will ultimately toe the party line. Political analysts suggest their rebellion against Amarinder Singh was prompted by whispers that they were set to be dropped in an upcoming cabinet reshuffle. In the past month, Bajwa's nephew Navjot Singh Mahal was transferred from the post of district police chief of Hoshiarpur to the less important post of commandant of armed police at Jalandhar. Punjab's various investigation agencies are also regathering documents on various scams, including the sale of spurious seeds and of illicit and spurious liquor. Meanwhile, the Enforcement Directorate has accelerated its probe into the irrigation scam. A few of the rebel ministers and legislators have also seen their names cropping up in the investigations.

The real headache for Congress leaders is reining in the aggressive Sidhu. On August 27, at a party function in Amritsar, Sidhu challenged the party high command, saying that if he was not allowed to take decisions, "*it naal it waja dawanga* (I will take each and every one to task)." However, before this, he had acceded to Rawat's demand to axe his controversial advisor Malvinder Singh Mali, after Mali embroiled himself in controversy by posting a sketch of the late prime minister Indira Gandhi standing near a heap of human skulls, holding a gun with a skull hanging on its muzzle—the cover page of a 1989 issue of a Punjabi magazine that he had edited. Then, on August 15, a post Mali put up claimed that Kashmir was a separate country and that both India and Pakistan were illegal occupants. Even Sidhu's loyalist Tript Rajinder Bajwa described this as anti-national material.

These developments have come at a time when Amarinder's camp is already livid with Sidhu for not criticising the August 17 vandalisation of a statue of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (founder of the Khalsa empire) at the Lahore Fort, allegedly by a member of the Tehreek-e-Labbaik, a radical group in Pakistan. Sidhu has also maintained silence on the unfolding situation in Afghanistan following the takeover by the Taliban, with many Hindu and Sikh families among the hundreds of Afghans waiting to be evacuated to India. Whether by his actions or silences, Sidhu has sparked several similar controversies in the past. In August 2018, he drew flak for hugging Pakistan army chief Qamar Javed Bajwa at Imran Khan's oath-taking ceremony as Pakistan prime minister. This was at a time when India-Pakistan ties had deteriorated following a string of terror attacks on Indian security installations in Dinanagar, Pathankot and Uri. Sidhu was also accused of shying away from criticising the Pakistani establishment after the February 2019 suicide attack on CRPF troopers in Pulwama, which escalated military tensions between India and Pakistan.

The CM's camp is worried that Sidhu's perceived sympathies for Pakistan will alienate moderate Sikhs and Hindus. Meanwhile, the feedback from the party high command seems to be that Amarinder Singh is facing anti-incumbency in Punjab and that Sidhu's elevation could help curtail this trend. Yet even after his appointment as PCC chief, Sidhu has continued to directly attack the chief minister. Leaders from Amarinder Singh's camp also complain that while office bearers of state units are usually given appointment letters printed only on AICC (All India Congress Committee) letterheads and signed by the national general secretary (organisation), Sidhu is appointing people on his own letterhead, bypassing the official procedure.

A top Congress leader tells INDIA TODAY that what Sidhu must realise is that he has only been appointed president of the state unit—this does not make the Punjab Congress his fief. However, the same leader also points out that no one knows how much rope he has been given by the Gandhi siblings. It might yet fall to Sonia Gandhi to restore order before it is too late. ■

BAHUJAN SAMAJ PARTY

# REVIVING BRAND BRAHMIN

By Ashish Misra

Photos: ANI

It was a sign of Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) president Mayawati's changing strategy when the party's national general secretary and Rajya Sabha MP Satish Chandra Misra decided to hold 'Prabuddha Vichar Goshthis (conference of the enlightened)' in 60 districts of Uttar Pradesh. The first of these was held in Ayodhya on July 23. The final one will be held on September 7 in Lucknow and will be addressed by Mayawati.

Participating in these *goshthis* will be the BSP's Brahmin coordinators posted in the state's 75 districts. Misra stated his party's intent unequivocally in a July 23 tweet: "...the key to power [in Uttar Pradesh] rests in the hands of 13 per cent Brahmins and 23 per cent Dalits; it's the BSP that has sent 40 Brahmins to the assembly, and 400 Brahmins have been murdered during the BJP government's rule."

Ahead of the 2022 UP assembly election, Mayawati is once again betting on the Dalit-Brahmin combination that had helped her party clinch the 2007 election, when it won 206 of the 403 assembly seats. Misra, a prominent Brahmin face of the party, has been entrusted with the task of winning over the community, which, going by Census 2011 figures, forms 13 per cent of the state's electorate. "Brahmins never got as much respect under any government as they did during the BSP's rule," he says. "There was no oppression of Brahmins in UP before the Yogi

## THE ONES WHO FLEW AWAY

*Prominent Brahmin leaders who left the BSP*

**BRAJESH PATHAK:** The former MP was a prominent Brahmin face of the BSP. He left the party in August 2016 to join the BJP. Was elected BJP MLA from Lucknow Central in 2017 and is now part of the Yogi Adityanath cabinet.

**DADDAN MISHRA:** He was a minister of state in the Mayawati government. Joined the BJP before the 2014 Lok Sabha election and was elected MP from Shravasti Lok Sabha seat. In June 2021, as a BJP candidate, he was elected unopposed to the post of district panchayat president in Shravasti district.

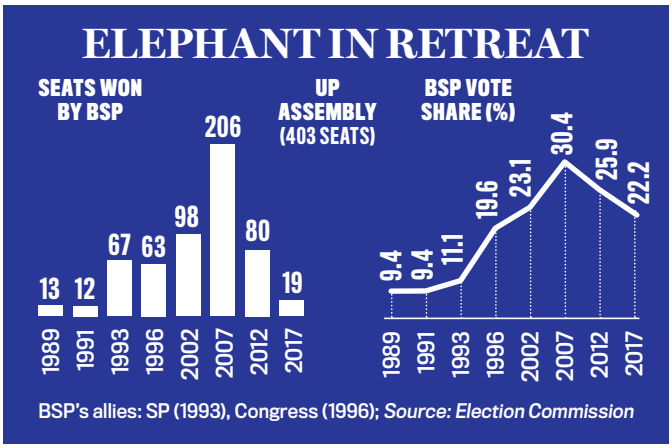
**RAMVEER UPADHYAY:** Former cabinet minister and BSP's Brahmin face in western UP. The Sadabad MLA was expelled by Mayawati in May 2019 on charges of indiscipline. Upadhyay did not switch to any other party to save his assembly membership.

**SEEMA UPADHYAY:** Ramveer Upadhyay's wife became an MP from Fatehpur Sikri on a BSP ticket in 2009. She joined the BJP in May 2021 and, as the party's candidate, won the election for district panchayat president from Hathras in July.

**MUKUL UPADHYAY:** A former BSP MLA from Iglas and former legislative council member, Upadhyay was expelled from the BSP in November 2018 on charges of indiscipline. He joined the BJP before the 2019 Lok Sabha election.

**RAKESH DHAR TRIPATHI:** He was a cabinet

**MISSION RESURRECTION**
BSP supremo Mayawati; MP Satish Chandra Misra (centre) at the party's Prabuddha Vichar Goshthi in Prayagraj on July 28




*Graphic by* TANMOY CHAKRABORTY

Adityanath government."

However, as Manish Hindvi, an associate professor of economics at Lucknow's Vidyant Hindu PG College who has studied the socio-economic structure of Dalits, points out, "Most of the leaders who had contributed to the formation of the BSP government in 2007 are not with Mayawati anymore. The BSP will have to work very hard to make Dalit-Brahmin social engineering work."

From 206 seats in 2007, the BSP was reduced to 19 seats in the 2017 assembly election. In the past four years, nine BSP MLAs have been suspended on charges of indiscipline. In the assembly bypoll held in 2019, the BSP lost the Jalalpur assembly seat in Ambedkar Nagar Lok Sabha constituency. This year, after the panchayat elections, Mayawati expelled two prominent leaders from Ambedkar Nagar district—Lalji Verma and Ram Achal Rajbhar. The number of Brahmins who won on BSP tickets has come down from 41 in 2007 to four in 2019.

Apart from Misra, the other prominent Brahmin leaders in the BSP are Vinay Tiwari, MLA from Chillupar; Ritesh Panday, Ambedkar Nagar MP and leader of the BSP in the Lok Sabha; former UP cabinet minister Nakul Dubey; Pawan Pandey and Ratnesh Pandey. "Many leaders either left the BSP or were expelled due to a lack of communication with Mayawati. And their number is only increasing. It has weakened the party," says Hindvi. More than 100 former coordinators left the BSP after the 2019 Lok Sabha debacle.

The Samajwadi Party (SP) has been the first choice of the BSP defectors. The SP and BSP had fought the 2019 Lok Sabha election as allies. Both fared miserably in the wake of a saffron wave. The BSP won 10 seats, twice as many as the SP. The two formations parted ways soon after. During the Rajya Sabha poll in October 2020, the tussle between the SP and BSP grew. Seven BSP MLAs revolted after Mayawati appeared to soften her stand towards the BJP. BSP leaders, though, believe that the rebellion came at the behest of the SP. An angry Mayawati suspended all seven legislators involved—Chaudhary Aslam Ali, Aslam Raini, Mujtaba Siddiqui, Sushma Patel, Vandana Singh, Hargovind Bhargava and Hakim Lal Bind.

The speculation now is that many of them may contest the 2022 assembly election on SP tickets. "The SP is the only party in UP which will give the BJP a tough fight in the next assembly election. The BSP has cheated the people with its covert alliance with the BJP," says Jamirullah, a former legislator who left the BSP to join the SP.

BSP leaders believe the departure of 'selfish' leaders will only strengthen their party. Dharamveer Chaudhary, one of the three spokespersons appointed by the BSP (for the first time), says: "If leaders who do not follow the BSP's ideology are leaving the party, then senior leaders like Rajkishor Singh, who was a minister in the Akhilesh Yadav government, are joining our ranks. Soon, a large number of leaders from other parties are going to join the BSP." Meanwhile, Mayawati and her party would do well to preserve their own flock. ■

minister in the Mayawati government and the BSP candidate from Bhadohi seat in the 2014 Lok Sabha election. Tripathi lost the election and was expelled from the BSP in November 2014. He isn't with any party at the moment.

↘ **RAJESH TRIPATHI:** He won the 2007 and 2012 UP assembly elections from Chillupar seat in Gorakhpur and was widely recognised as one of the BSP's most influential Brahmin leaders. Joined the BJP before the 2017 assembly election, but lost from Chillupar.

↘ **SHIV PRAKASH MISHRA 'SENANI':** During Mayawati's government, Mishra used to be the Brahmin face of the BSP in Pratapgarh and adjoining districts. He thrice contested assembly elections against Kunda MLA Raghuraj Pratap Singh, alias Raja Bhaiyya, from Pratapgarh seat. Joined the BJP just before the 2019 Lok Sabha election.

*Illustration by* SIDDHANT JUMDE

GLASSHOUSE

# GO FOR GORAKHPUR

**Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Uttar Pradesh chief minister Yogi Adityanath have a special relationship with Gorakhpur. Modi launched his Lok Sabha campaign from the district in 2014 and then again in 2019. In 2017, Gorakhpur was where he kickstarted the BJP's campaign for the state assembly election. Adityanath represented the Gorakhpur constituency for five consecutive terms in the Lok Sabha before taking over as CM in 2017. He is also the chief priest of the Gorakhnath Math temple. This year, on October 18, Modi will once again flag off a BJP campaign from Gorakhpur—for the 2022 UP assembly election. Will Gorakhpur prove to be fourth time lucky for the party?**

ANI

## The Umbrella Wars

West Bengal chief minister **Mamata Banerjee** has a new accessory—a blue umbrella. Rain or shine, the umbrella remains firmly in her hands at all times. According to political watchers, Mamata has borrowed this new look from Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself, who was admired for holding his own umbrella during the Lok Sabha monsoon session this year. As the competition heightens, it is raining symbolism.

## SINECURES & LADDERS

On August 31, senior IAS officer Anil Mukim quietly stepped down as Gujarat chief secretary without seeking a third extension. He has been replaced with Pankaj Kumar, a 1986-batch official. However, impressed with Mukim's handling of the state's preparedness in the battle against Covid, the BJP is thinking of giving him a prominent role post-retirement. The buzz is that Mukim might join the Prime Minister's Office as an advisor or, if he wishes to stay in the state, he might head the Gujarat Electricity Regulatory Authority in Gandhinagar.

## Son, Son, Son...

Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) chief K. Taraka Rama Rao (KTR) is the apple of his father chief minister **K. Chandrashekar Rao's** eye. In fact, recently, the CM even named the child of a couple that actively supports the party after KTR. The party's spin machine says the couple was estranged and it was a local TRS MLA who helped bring them back together. In gratitude they requested the CM to name their newborn baby and he decided to call him Taraka Rama Rao. What is politics without a little family drama?

CHANDRADEEP KUMAR

## BAGS OF CONFIDENCE

Tamil Nadu chief minister **M.K. Stalin** is not letting party rivalry interfere with his government's austerity drive. The DMK government inherited 6.5 million school bags worth Rs 13 lakh from the previous regime. The election sops, embossed with images of his AIADMK predecessors J. Jayalalithaa and E.K. Palaniswami, were meant for free distribution among school children. Rather than redoing the bags, Stalin has directed they be handed out without further delay. The money saved, he says, will be used for some other education scheme. A thrifty CM is just what the state needs right now.

***–Sandeep Unnithan with Ashish Misra, Amarnath K. Menon, Romita Datta & Kiran D. Tare***

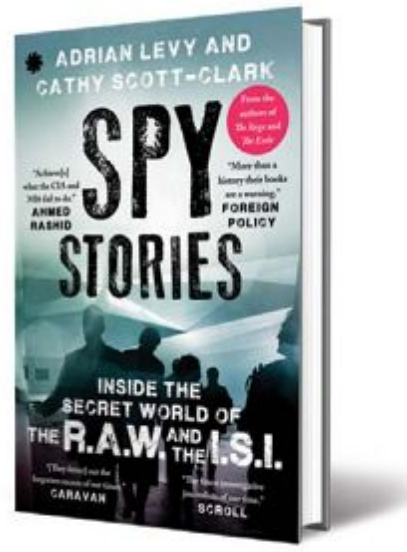
# SPY VS SPY

By T.C.A. Raghavan

*Spy Stories* brings Pakistan's Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) and India's Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) together into a single frame in the context of the recent history of India-Pakistan contestations, conflict and, more occasionally, engagement. The authors demonstrate their deservedly formidable reputations as investigative journalists in marshalling a wide—in fact, astonishing—range of sources in both countries, and in combining this with finely-tuned reportage and an intensive mining of published material. The end product is a gripping read.

The first and the briefest of the three sections in the book gives a rapid run-through of the early history of the ISI and RAW from 1968 to 2000. RAW was established in 1968. The ISI was founded the same year as Pakistan, and so had a head start over RAW. But the real difference between the two manifested itself in the 1980s, with the anti-Soviet jihad in Afghanistan. The book describes at some length the capacities RAW has since accumulated, especially in the area of technical intelligence-gathering and analysis. But one is tempted to conclude that the difference cast in the 1980s has remained, particularly where the ISI's sense of entitlement when operating within Pakistan is concerned.

The meat of the book consists of persons and events post 9/11. In this crowded kaleidoscope, a former RAW analyst and an ISI operative-turned-rogue—Manisha and Iftekar, respectively—provide an occasional narrative thread and a prism through which the respective organisations are viewed. Interviews with a wide range of former ISI and RAW officers and those in the larger intelligence and security fraternity provide the wider picture. The latter can be seen in three clusters of the principal events post 9/11: Kashmir and terrorist attacks in India; terrorist attacks in Pakistan and the involvement of serving and retired military officers with numerous extremist outfits and, finally, Pakistan's war in the tribal regions with the consequent blowback. Two interrelated factors provide the background. The first is President General Pervez Musharraf's turnaround post 9/11—that change meant also stabilising relations with India, something that the US, engrossed in Afghanistan, had been pressing him to do. The second was the impact of this change of tack on Kashmir.




**SPY STORIES**
**Inside the secret world of the RAW and the ISI**
*By Adrian Levy and Cathy Scott-Clark*
JUGGERNAUT
**₹490; 360 pages**

The book quotes the then ISI chief as feeling 'sickened' as he watched TV reports of an ongoing attack on India's Parliament in December 2001; other senior officials are quoted to the effect that 'we had the most to lose and the least to gain'. In India, the consensus was and is that this was an ISI-backed operation. A senior intelligence officer in India summed up this thinking with impeccable logic: "Outrages are tasked to a group, sometimes years before they actually happen. And after the commissioning process is completed, there is little by way of monitoring. At the launching phase of an attack, there is none." Such diametrically opposed narratives continue up to the present through the Kulbhushan Jadhav case, Pulwama and Balakot—all of which feature in the book.

In Pakistan itself, the blowback from terrorist groups facing ISI pressure was immense, and investigations have revealed the wide range of accomplices and sympathisers in the military. Within the ISI, counter-intelligence therefore assumed as much weight as intelligence-gathering and operations. In Kashmir, Levy and Scott-Clark suggest, the situation was even more complex. The ISI was seeking to roll back rogue operators while simultaneously using its operatives to eliminate those who were seeking engagement with India. This was a double game with multiple dimensions.

*Spy Stories* depicts a shadowy world in which rationale and intent are impossible to identify with clarity as mistrust and suspicion underwrite and determine analysis. Levy and Scott-Clark have a sure grasp of their subject, and their material is reasonably up to date, although how much of it is really new can be debated. Nevertheless, this is a narrative that offers perspective and drama, has enough granular detail to keep the reader engrossed and illuminates a different universe in which fact and fiction are inseparable. ■

**T.C.A. Raghavan** *is a former High Commissioner to Pakistan*

# THE BEGUMS OF BINGE

OTT PLATFORMS CHANGED THE INDIAN ENTERTAINMENT MATRIX FOR EVER DURING THE PANDEMIC AND DRIVING THEIR SUCCESS HAS BEEN A BUNCH OF PIONEERING WOMEN

*By* **SUHANI SINGH**

*Photograph by* BANDEEP SINGH

**THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC MAY** have confined Indians to their homes in the past year and a half, but amidst the gloom and doom there was one sector that was experiencing a boom: streaming entertainment. A whole new breed of content creators and distributors from the brave new world of Over The Top (OTT) platforms brought a quiet revolution to the way Indians spent their days of confinement. Instead of the tyranny of appointment-viewing and re-runs of old movies that cable TV offered, OTT platforms used the internet to stream entertainment in all genres, formats and languages. Most importantly, the content could be viewed at a time, place and on a device of our choosing: a cellphone, a laptop, a tablet—or, of course, a TV screen.

2020 was in fact a watershed year for the Indian entertainment industry. At long last, Indian viewers were spoilt for choice. The plethora of films, series, anthologies, documentaries and shorts that OTT offered wasn't limited to desi fare but was a massive buffet from across the world. Be it the anthology series *Ray* or the professor's exploits in *Money Heist* (Spain) or bingeing on 16-episode Korean dramas, there was something for everyone. So even as uncertainty reigned in the film industry, the 40-odd OTT platforms including the big-daddies Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Disney+Hotstar, SonyLIV and ZEE5 treated viewers to an estimated 1,200 hours of fresh content in 2020.

## APARNA PUROHIT

*Head, India Originals, Amazon Prime Video*

India is second largest Amazon Originals market, 70 projects in development

## MONIKA SHERGILL

*V-P, Content, Netflix*

Netflix spent Rs 3,000 crore on content in 2019-20; over 40 titles on release slate

## EKTA KAPOOR

*Joint MD, ALTBalaji*

Averaging over 20 web series a year, aiming for 40 shows next year

An EY-FICCI report from March 2021 confirms that the pandemic accelerated the growth of the industry last year with 28 million people—up from 10.5 million in 2019—paying for 53 million OTT subscriptions last year (which includes subscriptions for multiple platforms). Bollywood can no longer overlook the growing might of OTT. It's where the money is and, consequently, the jobs too. According to Media Partners Asia's 'The Future of India's Online Video Market' report, OTT platforms are expected to invest $1 billion for content in 2021. Taking to OTT isn't a sound career move; it is a no-brainer. Akshay Kumar, Ajay Devgn and Shahid Kapoor are some of the many stars who are set to make their digital debuts (see *Coming Soon*). And it is only going to get more competitive with Indian streaming platforms like ZEE5 vying with international ones like HBO Max which is planning to set up shop in India.

The film industry has also seen a powershift with traditional film producers giving way to the head honchos of OTT platforms who now play a crucial role in deciding what India watches. Three women have been at forefront of this streaming revolution, leading the creative wings of three of the most popular platforms: Aparna Purohit, head of India originals at Amazon Prime Video; Monika Shergill, vice-president, content, at Netflix; and Ekta Kapoor, joint managing director, Balaji Telefilms. Brought together for the first time for an INDIA TODAY magazine cover shoot, they are the new Begums of Binge.

## THE RISE OF THE BEGUMS

Each of the three begums has a fascinating tale to tell about her rise to the top. Purohit, for instance, grew up in Delhi enjoying Doordarshan shows like *Tamas, Buniyaad, Hum Log* and later world cinema at film festivals. An alumnus of Jamia Milia Islamia's mass communications programme, she shifted to Mumbai and had stints at companies like Sony TV, UTV and the National Film Development Corporation before joining Prime Video in 2015 to convince filmmakers to make their passion projects for the yet-to-launch SVoD (subscription video on demand) platform. "First reaction [we'd get] was 'You guys are a big mall. What do you know about content?'" recalls the 42-year-old Purohit. "A filmmaker, who I admire a lot, said, 'We still have a few films left in us. So please don't ask us to do these web shows'." Purohit no longer has to

**"A CREATIVE WAVE IS HAPPENING AND IT'S JUST BEGUN. EVERYONE IS LOOKING FOR THE BEST STORIES AND STORYTELLERS... WHEN WE CHALLENGE OURSELVES, THE AUDIENCE GETS THE BEST"**

**MONIKA SHERGILL**
*V-P, Content, Netflix*

**"EARLIER, THE FIRST REACTION WAS, 'YOU GUYS ARE A BIG MALL. WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT CONTENT?' PEOPLE ARE A LOT MORE AMENABLE TO WORKING WITH US NOW"**

**APARNA PUROHIT**
*Head, India Originals, Amazon Prime Video*

**"THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I DIDN'T LOSE SLEEP OVER CONTENT. BUT NOW I DO, AND I LOVE IT. IT DRIVES YOU, FRUSTRATES YOU, EXCITES YOU, IT IS PART OF BEING ALIVE AT YOUR JOB"**

**EKTA KAPOOR**
*Joint MD, Balaji Telefilms*

# THE STREAMING UNIVERSE

A LOOK AT SOME OF THE MAJOR PLAYERS IN THE INDIAN MARKET

## KNOW YOUR STREAMING SERVICE

**Subscription-based video on demand (SVoD)**

- User pays subscription fees–monthly or annual–to watch content
- Netflix, Amazon Prime Video, Disney+Hotstar, Voot Select, ALTBalaji, ZEE5, SonyLIV, MUBI and more

**Advertising-based video on demand (AVoD)**

- Programming is free but comes with ads; Includes catch up TV shows
- MX Player, TVF Play, Voot, Dice Media, Disney+ Hotstar, ZEE5, SonyLIV

**Telecom revenue**

- Mobile service operators provide users complimentary access to their OTT platform
- JioTV, JioCinema, Airtel Stream, Vi movies & TV

**Transactional video-on-demand (TVoD)**

- Rather than subscribing, users make a one-time payment for viewing the title
- ZEEPLEX, YouTube

## NETFLIX

**Launched** January 2016

**Estimated subscribers** 4.6 million

**Bestsellers** *Sacred Games, Delhi Crime, Little Things*

## prime video

**Launched** December 2016

**Estimated subscribers** 18 million

**Bestsellers** *Inside Edge, Mirzapur, The Family Man, Paatal Lok*

## Disney+ hotstar

**Launched** As Hotstar in February 2015; became Disney+ Hotstar in April 2020

**Estimated subscribers** Over 30 million

**Bestsellers** *IPL, Aarya, Special Ops*

## ZEE5

**Launched** February 2018

**Estimated subscribers** 4 million

**Bestsellers** *Rangbaaz*

## voot select

**Launched** March 2020

**Active subscribers** 1 million as of February 2021

**Bestsellers** *Asur, The Gone Game, Big Boss*

## MXPLAYER

**Launched:** Initially a video player, launched as an OTT platform in 2019

**Subscribers** NA; estimated users: 200 million

**Bestsellers** *Aashram, Queen, Raktanchal, Samantar*

## SONY liv

**Launched** 2013

**Estimated subscribers** 7 million

**Bestsellers** *Scam 1992: The Harshad Mehta Story*, sporting action such as Euro 2020, Tokyo 2020 and overseas cricket matches

## ALT BALAJI

**Launched** April 2017

**Active subscribers** 2.4 million as of June 2021

**Bestsellers** *Gandi Baat, Broken But Beautiful*

Source: Media Partners Asia's 'The Future of India's Online Video Market' report

chase stories. She now receives almost 10 pitches a day. Back in 2018, one of these included a crime drama with action, rivalry, revenge and humour set in a town in UP. "Data told us that there was nothing really for men to enjoy," says Purohit. Today, *Mirzapur* is one of Prime's most popular shows, greenlighted for a third season, and with a following even among women.

At Netflix, Shergill took charge of how to make optimum use of the Rs 3,000 crore, set aside in 2019 and 2020, to develop Indian originals—films, shows, documentaries and comedy specials—and acquire and license content. It's not the only investment Netflix has made in India. The streaming giant is developing a post-production facility in Mumbai, a first-of-its-kind venture. "If we have to tell the best stories to audiences, we have to contribute to the community and invest in infrastructure," says Shergill. "A creative wave is happening and it has just begun. Everyone is looking for the best stories and storytellers."

**"OUR INDUSTRY IS BECOMING MORE VIGOROUS AND STRATEGIC. IT MUST CREATE THE INFRASTRUCTURE AND BANDWIDTH TO MAKE SOME PARTS OF OUR CONTENT GLOBAL"**

**GAURAV BANERJEE**
*President, Hindi entertainment, Star India*

Shergill has been searching for them for over two decades now, beginning as a journalist who travelled across India in the early 1990s to report on environment and social justice for the TV series *Living on the Edge*. The need to tell impactful stories in a longer format led her to switch to entertainment. She went on to develop shows like the Aamir Khan-hosted *Satyamev Jayate* as well as work on fictional ones like *Jassi Jaisi Koi Nahin* and *CID*. At Netflix, Shergill finds herself wearing "many audience hats at the same time" as she curates a line-up for a "heterogeneous audience with nuanced tastes". It has resulted in shows like *Masaba Masaba* where the lines between fiction and reality are often blurred and *Jamtara: Sabka Number Ayega*, a crime drama inspired by the phishing scam in Jharkhand.

Ekta Kapoor may have one-fifteenth the budget of Netflix but that hasn't deterred her. Having already won over the women with TV dramas like *Kyunki Saas Bhi Kabhi Bahu Thi* and *Pavitra Rishta*, Kapoor realised there was potential to tap into two key demographics: the youth and the men. So began ALTBalaji in 2017. "I would have become old and rusty if not for ALT," says the 46-year-old who started out as a TV producer in 1994. "There was a time when I didn't lose sleep over content. But now I do, and I love it. It drives you, frustrates you, excites you, it is part of being alive at your job."

ALTBalaji is now one of the most prolific SVoD platforms with a library of 86 web shows, many of which can also be seen on other platforms including ZEE5 and MX Player. It is seen as the "bad boy" of apps (as Kapoor calls it) with shows like *Gandi Baat*, *XXX* and *Virgin Bhaskar* which explore youth sexuality. "We have so many shows but I don't know if it is the expectations given our TV background or the obsession with women doing clutter breaking or edgy content that gives us that reputation," says Kapoor.

Together, the three platforms vie for internet time, but for the three women there couldn't be a better time to be telling stories. Purohit watches OTT content up until the wee hours, following what her competition is up to and trying to identify the talented writer or actor. Shergill is a workaholic who is swiftly signing deals with the who's who in Bollywood, be it Sanjay Leela Bhansali, Karan Johar or Farhan Akhtar and Ritesh Sidhwani. Also a film producer, Kapoor is seeing the ripple effects of OTT's growing influence on cinema where filmmakers now have to think of how to "make the experience bigger" so that audiences return to theatres. Says Shergill, "The sheer number of projects

**"THERE IS ONLY SO MUCH A PERSON CAN WATCH. YOU HAVE TO BE MINDFUL OF WHAT YOU PUT OUT. IF YOUR CONTENT IS GREAT, PEOPLE WILL FIND IT AND WATCH, COME WHAT MAY"**

**SAUGATA MUKHERJEE**
*Head, Original content, SonyLIV*

MANDAR DEODHAR

in development, there's so much zest in writing, there's so much more work and space for voices to come in, both experienced and new."

## THE PANDEMIC BOOM

The begums agree that it was the pandemic that saw their viewership and fortunes soar. Many Indians such as Purohit's 76-year-old father and 67-year-old mother began watching OTT for the first time. A 2020 study by Ormax, a media analytics and consulting firm, found that between April-August 2020 nearly 23 million television viewers started streaming content; 57 per cent of them were women. "This highlights how younger audiences and men initiated older audiences and women into sampling original OTT content when TV shows were off air," says Shailesh Kapoor, CEO of Ormax Media.

The OTT boom also flourished because cinema theatres across India have largely remained shut since the pandemic raised its ugly head. In key markets like Maharashtra they were shut until August 2021. The outcome was that Bollywood's home base, Mumbai, had no posters of *Bellbottom*, supertstar Akshay Kumar's latest release. In its place were hoardings of Disney+ Hotstar's *The Empire*, starring Kunal Kapoor, Dino Morea, Drashti Dhami and Shabana Azmi.

In many ways, OTT has become a great leveller, altering, temporarily at least, our definition of stardom. Talented actors are no longer confined to the margins. On streaming platforms, they are getting to headline shows. Manoj Bajpayee speaks of how, thanks to *The Family Man*, he now gets mobbed at airports; Divyenndu has had fans in South India pour milk over cutouts of his character Munna from *Mirzapur*; Aaditi Pohankar of *Aashram* and *She* fame is recognised at a DMart in suburban Mumbai even when she has a mask on. "It has allowed Pankaj Tripathi to become a superstar," says Rohit Jain, managing director of Lionsgate, South Asia, which entered India in December with Lionsgate Play. "You'd watch a show because he features in it."

## MOMENT OF RECKONING

The FICCI-EY report estimates that OTT content will double to over 3,000 hours per year by 2023. It's no surprise then that the roster of filmmakers who want to tell stories, equivalent to three to four films, on digital is growing—including Sanjay Leela Bhansali, who will make the epic series *Heeramandi* for Netflix. Writers are thriving too, encouraged to tell longer, more

layered narratives and in some cases create a universe which they can keep returning to. "Earlier, it'd be like we have got the star and director, let's figure out some project," says Purohit. The attitude was "*Kuch na kuch toh likh lenge* [We will put together something]". With OTT, the ingenuity of the vision itself is the biggest sell and the actor who brings it alive need not be a box office star.

Bollywood knows that getting audiences back to theatres at pre-pandemic levels will be an uphill climb. "People will be wary of going into theatres often," says Saugata Mukherjee, head, original content, at SonyLIV, "OTT is a habit now." As a nation with some of the cheapest mobile data in the world, Indians top as consumers of online videos, spending an average 10 hours and 54 minutes per week.

If you can't beat 'em, join 'em seems to be the approach of film studios. Nearly every big one in Mumbai has opened a separate wing—from Dharma's Dharmatic and Viacom 18's Tipping Point Productions—to make shows or films for streaming. Some like Excel Entertainment and RSVP dabble in both under the same banner. The surge of OTT platforms is keeping everyone busy. "It's quite a challenge to get good stories," says Nimisha Pandey, head, Hindi Originals, at ZEE5 India. "Demand is increasing at such a pace that it gets crazy trying to match up. It's not enough to do one great show." As streamers battle to expand their customer base as well as hold on to existing subscribers, it is not enough to offer fresh programming regularly. Quality plays a significant role. If the content doesn't deliver, a click on 'cancel subscription' means the end. "You have to give the consumer value for their money and think not just about enough big scale shows but also achieving volume and consistency," says Pandey.

## GREAT EXPECTATIONS

OTT viewers don't settle for less. It's a "discerning audience", says Purohit, whose taste is evolving fast given the exposure they have to international shows. The Indian Netflix subscriber can pick Japanese anime while at Disney+ Hotstar HBO dramas like *Mare of Easttown* and *White Lotus* as well as a Marvel series like *Loki* are on offer. "You have a global selection of content to watch and compare," says Sameer Nair, CEO of Applause Entertainment, one of the leading studios making OTT content. "That is in turn making Indian streamers and creators more ambitious." But doing that requires imagination, time and money. At Applause, the budgets per episode range from Rs 1-2 crore to Rs 5-6 crore. It took Applause three years—from acquiring Sucheta Dalal and Debashis Basu's book to post-production—to ready *Scam 1992: The Har-*

# COMING SOON

## FILM STARS BITTEN BY THE STREAMING BUG

**Akshay Kumar**
(Amazon Prime Video)
The actor heeded son Aarav's advice on getting onto OTT "as that is what the youth is hooked on to". The action-adventure series, *The End*, will see Kumar once again in his popular 'khiladi' avatar

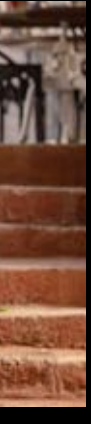
**Sonakshi Sinha**
(Amazon Prime Video)
Director Reema Kagti's second, still untitled, Amazon venture after *Made in Heaven* marks the OTT debut of Sinha, who plays a police officer

**Madhuri Dixit-Nene**
(Netflix)
In *Finding Anamika*, Dixit-Nene plays a superstar, wife and mother who suddenly vanishes. Developed by Karan Johar's Dharmatic Entertainment, the series is the actress's second project with Netflix after producing the film *15th August*

AP

**Priyanka Chopra Jonas**
(Amazon Prime Video)
The actress will headline the American edition of Russo Brothers' (*Avengers* fame) *Citadel*, an action-packed spy series. The show will have spinoffs in Italy, Mexico and India. The latter will be helmed by Raj & DK

**Ajay Devgn**
(Disney+Hotstar)
Devgn will play the titular part in *Rudra-The Edge of Darkness*, which is an adaptation of popular British series *Luther*. For the actor, the digital space offers tremendous reach which is "just going to grow"



**Shahid Kapoor**
(Amazon Prime Video)
A fan of *The Family Man*, Kapoor was keen to collaborate with its makers Raj & DK. Thankfully for him, he was their first choice for a "quirky drama thriller" which also features Tamil cinema's acclaimed actor Vijay Sethupathi

*Also expected

**Hrithik Roshan**
Expected to star in the desi adaptation of BBC One's Tom Hiddleston-starrer *The Night Manager*

**Ranveer Singh**
The actor is rumoured to be doing an action-adventure non-fiction series with Bear Grylls for a major international platform

*shad Mehta Story*, one of the most successful web series of 2020. "The process of telling an 8-10 part series is a time-consuming, excruciating experience," says Nair. "It requires a different discipline and mindset."

Gaurav Banerjee, president, Hindi entertainment, Star India, would agree. "The gestation time of shows has gone up," says Banerjee. So have the "resources spent on getting the quality absolutely right". For Banerjee, that's no longer restricted to the SVoD's most valued property, the IPL. India's biggest OTT giant, Disney+Hotstar, recently announced a new slate of 14 specials under the tagline 'Har Watch, Top Notch'. Its latest release, *The Empire*, a period drama on Mughal emperor Babur, offers proof that the platform is not afraid to spend to tell a story on the scale of a feature.

The investments that OTT platforms are making are transforming the entertainment industry at large. Writer's rooms are now the go-to way to create a project. The concept of a 'showrunner' to make a series has gained traction. "Our industry is becoming a lot more vigorous and strategic," says Banerjee. "It is hopefully creating the infrastructure and bandwidth to make some parts of our content global." But before spreading its wings internationally, India's OTT players are looking to increase their footprint in India.

**622**
**MILLION**
No. of active internet users in India in 2020, second only to China

**28**
**MILLION**
Indians paid for 53 million OTT subscriptions in 2020, leading to a 49% growth in digital subscription revenues

**10 HOURS 54 MINUTES**
Average time Indians spent each week watching online videos in 2020, an increase of 30% from 2019, making India the biggest consumer of such entertainment

## LANGUAGE NO BAR

Soon after finding success with *Scam 1992*..., its leading man Pratik Gandhi starred in *Vitthal Teedi*, the maiden show of newly launched Gujarati OTT platform Oho. It was one of the many language-specific platforms to launch in the last 18 months including Aha (Telugu), Neestream (Malayalam), Heeroz (Punjabi), Katte (Kannada), to name a few. For Disney+ Hotstar's Gaurav Banerjee, new audience share will come from the non-Hindi markets. "Sitting in Mumbai, we think Hindi is India's largest language but it only talks to half of this country," he says. "How do we talk to the other half?" The platform has already released shows in Tamil and Telugu and is developing more.

Watching dubbed titles and shows with subtitles are already integral aspects of watching streaming content. OTT, with its large library of regional titles, is blurring the linguistic barriers quickly. Last year, Amazon Prime and Netflix upped their Tamil, Telugu, Malayalam and Kannada content by acquiring a host of films for direct-to-digital release. Netflix went a step ahead and roped in Mani Ratnam to helm *Navarasa*, a Tamil anthology which featured Suriya, Vijay Sethupathi, Arvind Swami, Siddharth among other actors. SonyLIV, which collaborated with The Viral Fever for a Marathi series, is also rolling out Tamil and Telugu shows. Voot Select will also foray into the regional space in the coming months. The FICCI-EY report says that by 2025 regional language consumption on OTT platforms will peak, crossing 50 per cent of total time spent.

## FUTURE PERFECT

While most sectors in the entertainment landscape saw revenues dip, digital media and online gaming were the only ones to see growth in 2020. An RBSA Advisors July 2021 report estimated that the number of smartphone users in India would reach over 760 million in 2021, second only to China. While nearly 70 per cent of India watches video content on mobile, the smart TV market is also gradually building with prices of TV sets falling. A 32-inch smart TV cost Rs 7,200 in 2020, down from Rs 8,499 in 2019. SonyLIV's Mukherjee believes it will lead to "a big change in quality and narratives" as from individual viewing OTT becomes a co-viewing option.

Ferzad Palia, head, SVoD & international business, Viacom18 Digital Ventures, says that innovation is the need of the hour. "Every platform will look to differentiate itself," said Palia. "If nothing stands out, the consumer will see through you." In August, Viacom18 launched an OTT edition of its popular reality show, *Bigg Boss*, on Voot Select, running a 24-hour live feed of activities in the house on the AVoD (advertising-based video on demand) platform Voot. "We've given the [OTT] industry a model on how shows can be monetised,"

MANDAR DEODHAR

**"IT IS QUITE A CHALLENGE TO GET GOOD STORIES. DEMAND IS INCREASING AT SUCH A PACE THAT IT IS CRAZY TRYING TO MATCH UP. IT IS NOT ENOUGH TO DO ONE GREAT SHOW"**

**NIMISHA PANDEY**
*Head, Hindi Originals, ZEE5*

***(OPENING SPREAD) OUTFITS:*** *(Aparna)* Tadashi Shoji, *(Monika)*, Gauri 'n Nainika, *(Ekta)*,Dash n Dot. ***JEWELLERY:*** Azotiique, Curio Cottage and Ananta Fine Jewellery. ***SHOES:*** *(Aparna)* Valentino, *(Ekta)* Massimo Dutti. Styled by Eshaa Amiin; assisted by Ankitha. ***BACKDROP:*** Moon Dot Chair by Lekha Washington

he says, citing a rise in subscribers, viewership and ad revenue.

The OTT boom, though, comes with a caveat. While the success of theatrical films and TV shows can be measured through box office collections and TRPs respectively, the streamers are still not transparent on viewership figures. How does one measure a successful show? "If you are getting to do a season two, it's a good marker," says Mukherjee of SonyLIV. For Disney+Hotstar's Gaurav Banerjee, OTT is not a T-20 match but "a long game". "It's the baby who is learning how to flex its muscles and has started to run a bit," he says. "There is a lot to learn and massive amount of growth ahead."

Challenges lie ahead too. The Union ministry of information and broadcasting introduced guidelines in February which mandated that OTT platforms set up a grievance redressal board to deal with complaints from viewers. After having a relatively free reign with programming, the Begums now have to be more cautious than ever on what they are commissioning. Kapoor already has over a hundred legal cases filed against ALT shows such as *Virgin Bhaskar*. Recently, Amazon Prime Video's political drama *Tandav* faced a backlash for a scene in which a lead character dresses as Lord Shiva. It was later cut out. Rather than censorship, streamers would prefer self-regulation. Shergill, though, doesn't find the guidelines restricting. "Nothing is stopping us from telling the diverse stories we are telling," she says. "We believe in striking the right balance between creative excellence and telling stories responsibly."

Another hurdle is that most of the OTT subscriber base is currently concentrated in the four metros and other big cities. The next wave of growth will need to come from Tier II and III cities and rural regions. The job of luring them to streaming lies with the likes of Kapoor, Purohit and Shergill. They are up to the task. Kapoor plans to up ALT shows from 24 a year to 40 in 2022. Purohit has 70 projects in various stages of development. Shergill is expanding the Netflix slate to include a stand-up special by Kapil Sharma. They aren't insecure about eating into each other's market. "If all of us challenge each other, we better our craft and audiences get the best in stories," says Shergill. Pandemic or no pandemic, OTT platforms are here to stay. ■

DSEU
Crafting Excellence

# Higher Education

"With Delhi Skill and Entrepreneurship University, the Government of Delhi aims to create a world class institution delivering quality skills education recognized by the industry, nationally and internationally."

**Arvind Kejriwal,**
Chief Minister, Govt of NCT Delhi

**1 in 5 graduates in India are unemployed [1]**

**Nearly 40% youth between 21-25 are unemployed [2]**

***Source : Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy***

## India's Job Crisis

In 2018, the UP police department advertised 62 vacancies for the post of 'telephone messengers'. The job required candidates to have passed class 5 and know how to bicycle. Of the 93,000 applicants- 50,000 were graduates, 28,000 were post-graduates, and 3,700 had a PhD.

India's job crisis presents a twofold problem. First, a large proportion of youth is unemployed. More pertinently, and what the numbers do not show, is that educated young people take up jobs that are not commensurate with their qualifications. This is a direct result of the disconnect between what many colleges have on offer, market demands, and the overall poor quality of education in many institutes of higher education in India.

Additionally, often it is seen that mass recruiting industries have to re-train students and have them undergo several months of additional courses to make them ready for the job. All of this highlights the disconnect between traditional education and current industry requirements.

## A Forward-Thinking University

Given this landscape, Delhi Skill and Entrepreneurship University (DSEU) aims to impart high-quality education in all fields of study and supplement it with entrepreneurial preparation. DSEU's mission is to provide education to students to help and enable them to access aspirational roles in the 21st Century market place and be equipped with the skills to do the work.

With 15 campuses spread across Delhi, DSEU is one of the city's largest Universities now offering a range of Degree and Diploma Courses.

## A Revamped Curriculum

DSEU's first step was to design and revamp its curriculum in partnership with industry leaders, formalised through DSEU's Curriculum Advisory Group (CAG) and Curriculum Review Committees (CRC). The CAG comprises of subject matter experts from academia and industry, and there is a unique CAG for each Bachelor's and Master's Course and CRC for each diploma course. For example, the B.A. in Aesthetics and Beauty Therapy was developed in collaboration with professionals from HairMasters, Godrej, Jean Claude Biguine Salon and Spa, among others.

*Image: DSEU's Campus in Dwarka, New Delhi*

# for a New Age

FOCUS DELHI

## Core Principles

### Relevant courses for the 21st century marketplace

Developing market-linked courses in close partnership with industry leaders leading to specific job roles for students. DSEU has already forged official ties with Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), SRL Laboratories, RR Donnelley, and HDFC Life, among many others.

### Face the World Skills

In addition to their major, students will be equipped with a range of transferable skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, communication, and digital skills that are required to succeed in the 21st-century workplace.

### Inculcate an Entrepreneurial Mindset

DSEU aims to support students who acquire a skill to also set up their own enterprise. Presently, the University has 2 campuses with incubation centres that provide support to start-ups through mentorships, consultancies, and provision of seed money against equity. All students will be provided an enabling and supportive curriculum and environment for developing entrepreneurial ventures.

**DSEU's Key Industry Partners:**

- Infosys
- Mercedes Benz
- HDFC Life
- SRL Limited
- HDFC Bank
- Quess Corp

**20+ industry partnerships formed** so far

## Relevant, Innovative, and Market-Oriented Courses

- B.A. Digital Media and Design
- B.Sc. Data Analytics
- B.Sc. Medical Laboratory Technology
- BMS (e-Commerce Operations)
- BCA (Bachelor of Computer Application)
- BBA (Facilities and Hygiene Management)

## Internships, Industry Exposure, Learn from Industry

DSEU's courses were not only designed in collaboration with industry leaders, but also contain a large component of exposure to industry throughout the courses. Selected courses will be taught by industry professionals, several guest lectures from industry will be organized, exposure visits to a variety of industry will be a key aspect of education at DSEU. All courses will have a compulsory internship component. Also a Graduate Apprenticeship Programme in 3 of its degree courses has been introduced. Students pursuing these courses will be able to undergo on-the-job training, while earning University credits. This includes BBA in Retail Management, wherein students will undergo a 21-month long apprenticeship programme.

## Inspiring Leaders, Expert Faculty

The DSEU is being led by **Prof. Neharika Vohra, former professor at IIM - Ahmedabad** with over two decades of experience as an educationist. She has also worked extensively in Centre for Innovation Incubation Entrepreneurship at IIM-A bringing experience to guide a specialized skill and entrepreneurship university. The University has also leadership from Prof. Snigdha Pattnaik, formerly at XUB, Bhubaneswar and Prof. Rihan Khan Suri, from Jamia Millia Islamia University. There are several team members with deep skilling experience who have been on-boarded to help the process of setting up key verticals of the university. Furthermore, the University is empanelling faculty from eminent universities and leading industry to teach its flagship programs. The University currently has 500+ faculty with strong academic background. To familiarise faculty in pedagogies for deepening wholistic development of students the University is conducting mandatory faculty development programs.

## Multiple Opportunities for Entry and Exit

Inspired by NEP students may choose to exit a programme at DSEU after a specified period to pursue employment, while retaining their credits and earning a diploma. DSEU's diploma is well established and students with the award may take up jobs commensurate with their education and experience. Similarly, students may also transfer in to courses midway, given prior training in the skill. DSEU also offers a unique opportunity to meritorious engineering diploma students to enrol in the Integrated Engineering Program wherein they may graduate with an Engineering B.Tech. degree.

## Crafting Excellence

DSEU strives to provide a world-class skill education to its students for them to excel in their chosen skill. Recently, the University conducted the first state level skill competitions as a step to the World Skills Competition- an Olympics of Skill, to be held in Shanghai in 2022.

DSEU is raising the bar for skill education in India to nurture a generation of skilled Indian youth that is at par with its international counterparts.

ANI

**AT THE FOREFRONT** Goa CM Dr Pramod Sawant during the flag hoisting ceremony on Independence Day, 2020

# A SEARCH FOR ALLIES

AS THE GOA ASSEMBLY ELECTION DRAWS NEAR, POLITICAL PARTIES ARE EXPLORING POTENTIAL ALLIANCES

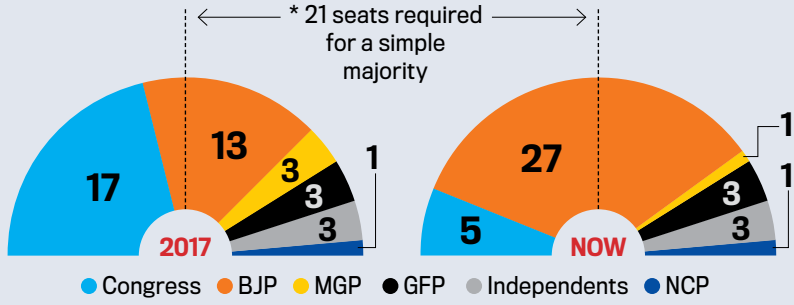
By Kiran D. Tare

**THE GOA GOVERNMENT** under chief minister Pramod Sawant has promised to provide 16,000 litres of free water every month to each household from September 1. While the water bill of almost 300,000 families is expected to go down to zero, the state government will lose a monthly revenue of Rs 11.5 crore. This is the first time ever that a government in Goa has announced freebies for its people, a clear reminder of the nearing assembly election.

Goa is due to elect a new government in February 2022 and all political parties in the state have begun the exercise of finding allies. While the BJP gauges the Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party's (MGP) willingness to join forces, all eyes are on a possible alliance between the Congress and the Goa Forward Party (GFP). The GFP seems willing, but the Congress, true to its nature, is stalling.

## CHANGING TIMES

*In 2017, the Congress had emerged as the single largest party with 17 seats in the 40-member* Assembly. In August 2018, Atanasio Monserrate won the by-election in Panaji after the death of then chief minister Manohar Parrikar. So, in all, the Congress had won 18 seats. However, because of mass defections, the Congress' footprint in the state has now been reduced to five seats.*




## FROM MINORITY TO MAJORITY

*The BJP has managed to poach 15 MLAs, more than its original tally, over the past three years*

**APRIL 7, 2017:** Congress heavyweight Vishwajit Rane defected to join the BJP even before he was officially sworn in as an MLA. He won the subsequent by-election on a BJP ticket and was inducted into the cabinet as health minister.

**OCTOBER 17, 2018:** Two Congress MLAs, Subhash Shirodkar and Dayanand Sopte, quit the party to join the BJP. They won the subsequent by-elections on BJP tickets.

**MARCH 27, 2019:** The MGP's Manohar Ajgaonkar and Deepak Pauskar joined the BJP. Ajgaonkar was made deputy CM while Pauskar was given charge of the PWD.

**JULY 11, 2019:** Ten Congress MLAs—Chandrakant Kavlekar, Atanasio Monserrate, Jennifer Monserrate, Filipe Neri Rodrigues, Nilkanth Halarankar, Francisco Silveira, Clafasio Dias, Insidore Fernandes, Wilfred D'Sa and Tony Fernandes—jump ship to join the BJP.

While GFP president Vijai Sardesai claims he was informed by Dinesh Gundu Rao, Congress in-charge for Goa, that the party high command has given its nod to the alliance, according to state president Girish Chodankar, party leaders are yet to receive any communication on this subject. Meanwhile, on August 16, an impatient Sardesai announced GFP candidates in four constituencies—Mandrem, Haldona, Saint Andre and Thivim. "The Congress should take a call on the alliance by Ganesh Chaturthi (September 10)," says Sardesai. Political observer Rajan Desai believes that a Congress-GFP front could dampen the BJP's chances of returning to power after a 10-year rule. "If they fight together, the Congress-GFP could damage the BJP extensively in south Goa where the minority voters are dominant," says Desai.

The Congress and GFP were in a similar situation in 2017, when ongoing talks of an alliance were derailed after Luizinho Faleiro, then state Congress president, broke his promise at the last moment and fielded Jose D'Silva against the GFP's Sardesai in his turf, Fatorda. In response, the GFP backed an independent, Edwin Souza, against Faleiro in Navelim and Sardesai ultimately extended the support of his party's three MLAs to the BJP, making the late Manohar Parrikar chief minister, disregarding the Congress' request for a post-poll alliance.

This time around, the Congress seems to have learned its lesson from the inability of then general secretary Digvijaya Singh to form a government in 2017 despite being the single-largest party in the state. It has appointed P. Chidambaram as an observer and tasked him with chalking out a poll strategy. The former Union finance minister, too, has been non-committal on the party's alliance with the GFP. "We are preparing in all 40 constituencies. There is no talk of an alliance yet," Chidambaram told reporters in Panaji on August 26.

To create a rift between the Congress and GFP, the BJP on August 18 inducted the Congress Fatorda block president Piedade Noronha and convenor Joseph Silva into its ranks. Losing Noronha, who belongs to the Scheduled Tribe, a community with a 25 per cent vote share in Fatorda, is a major setback for the party. The BJP's possible candidate, Damodar Naik, also represents the ST community. If the Congress and GFP could resolve their differences in Fatorda, the alliance could give the BJP a tough fight. If not, the BJP is likely to benefit once again.

### BJP ON SLIPPERY GROUND

Shripad Naik, Union minister of state for tourism, has said that a BJP-MGP alliance could help avoid a division of Hindu votes. The MGP has not ruled out the possibility of an alliance with the BJP or any other party. Its president Sudin Dhavalikar has said that the final decision will be taken by the party's central committee, adding that the MGP will contest 12 seats and back independents in some others. This could be taken as the party's plan to go it alone.

Sawant is the first BJP CM to enjoy the support of two-third of the MLAs.

The BJP has 27 MLAs and the backing of one independent—Govind Gaude. That the BJP has taken Goa seriously is evident from the back-to-back visits by national party president J.P. Nadda and general secretary (organisation) B.L. Santhosh in July.

The BJP has made it clear that it will contest the next election under Sawant's leadership, but several ambitious ministers might create roadblocks. Health minister Vishwajit Rane, Rajya Sabha member Pramod Tendulkar and state BJP president Sadanand Shet Tanavade have thrown their hats in the ring. Moreover, at least three ministers, apart from Rane, want election tickets for their respective wives. Deputy chief minister Chandrakant Kavlekar is keen on the Sanguem constituency for his wife Savitri; Rane plans to field his wife Divya from Poriem; port minister Michael Lobo has staked claim on Siolim for his spouse Delilah; and former minister Pandurang Madkaikar wants his wife Janet to replace him in Cumbarjua.

Savitri and Delilah are politically active—Savitri had unsuccessfully contested the 2017 election on a Congress ticket in Sanguem, while Delilah is a member of the gram panchayat. Lobo could spell trouble for BJP candidates in Siolim and Saligao constituencies if his wife is not fielded from Siolim. Kavlekar, too, holds clout in four constituencies in south Goa and might damage the BJP's chances there. Plus, Divya is husband Rane's best shot at the chief minister's chair. As per the plan, if she wins as an independent from Poriem, Rane could bargain for the top post in return for her support in a likely close contest.

CHANDRADEEP KUMAR

**STUDYING GOA** P. Chidambaram has been appointed by the Congress to chalk out a poll strategy

## THE LOCAL COLOUR

**The BJP and Congress are eyeing alliances with smaller parties like the MGP and the GFP, respectively, since these parties could determine the poll outcome in several constituencies**

**MAHARASHTRAWADI GOMANTAK PARTY (MGP):** The oldest party in Goa after the Congress, the MGP is struggling to remain relevant in state politics. It ruled Goa in the 1980s but lost its sheen after it joined hands with the BJP, a new entrant in the 1990s. However, the MGP's loyal voters—mainly upper caste and OBC Hindus—play an important role in at least seven constituencies in north Goa—Mapusa, Dicholim, Mayem, Pernem, Mandrem, Marcaim and Priol.

**GOA FORWARD PARTY (GFP):** Launched in 2016, the GFP won three seats in 2017 in its first election. It has a good presence in Margao and Fatorda in south Goa, as well as in Siolim and Saligao in north Goa. Inclined towards the Congress, the GFP wants to take revenge on the BJP for the humiliating treatment meted out to it in March 2018 when chief minister Pramod Sawant sacked GFP leader Vijai Sardesai from his cabinet.

**POLITICAL OBSERVERS BELIEVE A CONGRESS-GFP FRONT COULD DAMPEN THE CHANCES OF THE BJP RETURNING TO POWER AFTER A 10-YEAR RULE**

### SMALLER PARTIES IN THE FRAY

In 2017, as a new entrant in Goa politics, the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) had drawn a blank in spite of extensive campaigning by Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal and a battery of influential people. This time the AAP is eyeing an alliance with the MGP. During a visit to Goa in July, Kejriwal assured the people of the state free electricity up to 300 units per month if his party is voted to power. The AAP's chief ministerial candidate in 2017, Elvis Gomes, joined the Congress in August. The party is now banking on Mahadev Naik, a former BJP minister who joined the AAP in July.

Revolutionary Goan, an organisation led by former AAP leader Manoj Parab, has made quite an impact in north Goa, especially among the youth. "Those who are new in politics are pure. The established leaders are strong but they have failed to frame development policies for Goa. Our focus is on empowering the youth," says Parab. The Revolutionary Goan is going to make its poll debut in 2022 and has the capacity to turn a few hundred Hindu votes in its favour, spelling trouble for the BJP.

Sensing that the path to power will be tough, CM Sawant is focussing on two subjects close to the Goans' heart—iron ore mining and tourism. He says the recently incorporated Goa Mineral Development Corporation (GMDC) aims to provide employment to 300,000 people. "The GMDC will begin mining-related activities, like auctioning of several mining leases. The government will extract 20 million tonnes of ore...once it starts mining activity, it will continue to remain uninterrupted," says Sawant. He has also promised to write to the Union home ministry requesting permission for charter flights to land in Goa before the tourism season begins on October 1. If that happens, international tourists could reach Goa, giving the state's dormant tourism sector a new lease of life. ■

# THE RUSSIAN ARMS PIPELINE

**A STRING OF NEW DEFENCE DEALS SETS THE STAGE FOR THE FORTHCOMING FACE-TO-FACE SUMMIT BETWEEN PRIME MINISTER MODI AND RUSSIAN PRESIDENT VLADIMIR PUTIN**

By Sandeep Unnithan

ANI

**HAND IN HAND**
Russian defence minister Sergei Shoigu (left) meets India's ambassador to Russia, D.B. Venkatesh Varma, at the International Army Games 2021 near Moscow, Aug. 25

LORD OF WAR MEETS *James Bond* in a dimly-lit conference room in the heart of Moscow. See-through glass panels glisten with images of drones, tanks and missiles. A hologram host—a Russian-speaking woman in a little black dress—glides along minimalist concrete walls to explain cutting-edge weaponry produced by Moscow's military industrial complex. Coiffed English-speaking executives, the public relations tip of an export-focused military enterprise, walk around the display with tablets. Welcome to the headquarters of the Federal Service of Military Technical Cooperation (FSMTC), the Russian body overseeing global arms exports worth over $50 billion (Rs 3.65 lakh crore) annually.

In the conference room, FSMTC director Dmitry Shugaev downplays the US sanctions hanging like the sword of Damocles over Russia's arms transactions with India. "Such sanctions have zero per cent effect," says Shugaev. "India is interested in strengthening its military capability." This would certainly seem to be the case. Later this year, the Indian Air Force (IAF) will take delivery of the first consignment of the Russian-built S-400 long range air defence missile system. It is part of a $5.43 billion (Rs 39,645 crore) deal for five systems signed in 2018 in the teeth of opposition from the US. The US has warned India about the provisions of CAATSA (Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act) against countries dealing with Russia, promoted by Moscow's alleged interference in the 2016 US presidential polls and military actions in Syria and Ukraine.

No US sanctions have been imposed yet, possibly because India is not just a strategic ally but has also bought $18 billion (Rs 1.31 lakh crore) worth of US arms since 2008, with tens of billions of dollars of arms still in the pipeline. India's defence requirements have remained unchanged by the pandemic-induced economic downturn. The aggressive nine-month deployment by the PLA (People's Liberation Army) in Ladakh, beginning last year, underscored the fact that India's three-decades-long peace

# ON THE SHOPPING LIST

*India and Russia have multi-billion-dollar deals in the works*

## SECOND AKULA-CLASS SSN

Number: **1**

**$3 billion (Rs 21,910 cr)**

On a 10-year lease, in addition to one Akula-class submarine for which a $3 billion refit and lease deal was signed in 2019.

**Status:** Under negotiation

## KILO-CLASS SUBMARINES

Number: **4**

**$1 billion+ (over Rs 7,300 cr)**

Ex-Russian Navy submarines to be sold at Re 1 + $250 million refurbishing costs each in Russian shipyard.

**Status:** Under negotiation

## SU-30MKI JETS

Number: **18**

**$700 million (Rs 5,110 cr)**

Last batch of jets to be license-built by HAL in Nashik.

**Status**: Under negotiation

## AK-203 ASSAULT RIFLES

Number: **750,000**

**$1.6 billion (Rs 11,690 cr)**

Both sides are close to finalising unit cost of the assault rifle to be produced at the OFB factory in Amethi.

**Status**: Under negotiation

## KAMOV 226T HELICOPTERS

Number: **200**

**$1 billion (Rs 7,300 cr)**

HAL and Russian Helicopters have floated a joint venture, Indo-Russian Helicopters, for production of this machine. The MoU was signed in June 2018.

**Status:** Under negotiation

## SPRUT SD1 LIGHT TANKS

Number: **350**

Front-runner as the Indian Army hunts for a 25-tonne air-transportable tank capable of deployment in diverse terrain. The army is also considering a limited off-the-shelf buy.

## MIG-29 AIRFRAMES

Number: **21**

**$800 million (Rs 5,840 cr)**

Ex-Soviet airframes to be purchased, re-engined, refurbished to make up for the IAF's depleting fleet.

**Status:** Under negotiation

on the boundary with China might have come to an end. This uncertainty is underwritten by weapons deals and deft diplomatic manoeuvring between the US and Russia, two of India's strategic partners who have been waging a mini Cold War since 2017.

The rupee-rouble payment route worked out by India and Russia to avoid US sanctions and bypass SWIFT transactions has been humming for the past two years. In the pipeline are multi-billion-dollar Indo-Russian defence deals. Both countries recently initiated discussions on leasing a second Akula-class nuclear-powered attack submarine (SSN) to bolster India's severely depleted submarine arm. It is in addition to the Russian Navy's submarine Bratsk (now called Chakra-3) that will join the Indian Navy in 2026. India and Russia concluded a $3 billion (Rs 21,910 crore) deal for the Chakra-3 in 2019. The cost covers the vessel's 72-month refit and 10-year lease. The second SSN will ensure that the navy's carrier battle groups, centred around the INS *Vikramaditya* and the INS *Vikrant*, will have one attack submarine each. The two SSNs can also be used for escorting India's fleet of four Arihant-class ballistic missile submarines.

At the other end of the technology spectrum, both countries recently inked a Rs 300 crore deal for 70,000 AK-series rifles. This comes even as they negotiate a $1.6 billion (Rs 11,690 crore) deal for joint production of over 700,000 pieces of the assault rifle in Amethi, Uttar Pradesh. The army, this April, floated a global inquiry for buying 350 light tanks which will be air transportable and, more importantly, deployed in the Himalayan mountains against China. The Russian-built Sprut light tank is a front-runner because it weighs a little more than an infantry combat vehicle but packs a heavy 125mm gun of the kind carried by the army's T-72 and T-90 medium tanks. The army wants to buy a limited number of Sprut tanks off the shelf.

Then, there are deals worth $15 billion (Rs 1.09 lakh crore) either being

executed or negotiated. The weapon buys will be foregrounded by the first in-person bilateral meeting between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian President Vladimir Putin in Moscow in two years, scheduled in Russia later this year. Besides the thriving defence cooperation, there are frequent joint military exercises, and Russia is also assisting in training the four astronauts selected for India's Gaganyaan manned space mission set for 2022.

G. Parthasarathy, former high commissioner to Islamabad, says PM Modi's visit to Russia is a reassertion of India's policy of strategic autonomy. "We are part of the Quad with the US because we need to balance Chinese power in the Indo-Pacific, but this will not come at the cost of our relationship with Russia. That is the true essence of strategic autonomy," he says.

The relationship has become particularly complicated in recent years because Russia and China also share close security cooperation and a relationship driven by arms sales and common loathing for the US. "We have glorious past, good present and a bright future," says Ruslan Pukhov, director of the Moscow-based think tank Centre for the Analysis of Strategies and Technologies (CAST). But he adds a few caveats. "Russians are very nervous about US activity in India. Indians are suspicious about Russian-Chinese rapprochement. So there are huge risks, especially after the departure of Putin or Modi since many things are based on their personal chemistry," says Pukhov.

There is Pakistan as well. In recent years, Moscow has sold Mi-35 helicopter gunships, Klimov RD-93 jet engines for JF-17 fighters and Pantsir air defence missile systems to Islamabad. These arms sales have violated verbal assurances to India. But it has not come in the way of the Russia-India relationship for several important reasons. Despite a renewed drive to achieve self-sufficiency in defence production launched last year, India is still years away from becoming self-reliant in critical areas of defence production.

Russian assistance is key to bridging capability gaps, such as the nuclear-powered attack submarine fleet. India's indigenous programme to build six nuclear submarines will take at least a decade to deliver its first unit. The navy returned its only nuclear-powered attack submarine, the Chakra-2, to Russia this year after the 10-year lease ended. This is where the two Akula-class submarines come as a booster shot.

Russia has also offered to sell four second-hand Kilo-class submarines to tide over a shortfall of conventional submarines—with India needing to pay an estimated $1 billion (Rs 7,300 crore) for refitting all four vessels in a Russian yard. These boats will be a stop-gap measure before the navy starts getting six conventional Project 75I submarines from domestic shipyards. Indian soldiers posted at high altitudes could be resupplied with the Kamov 226T helicopter, a boxy machine capable of hefting a one-tonne load. Indian infantry could soon be armed with Russian-designed AK-203 assault rifles, a modernised version of the iconic rifle which entered service over seven decades ago.

**RUSSIAN ARMS DEALS NOW FACE GREATER SCRUTINY AS INDIA IS INSISTING ON TRANSFER OF CRITICAL TECHNOLOGIES**

Long pending deals for spares have helped speed up the ongoing refit in Karwar of the Russian-built INS *Vikramaditya*. A $2.5 billion (Rs 18,250 crore) contract for four Krivak-class frigates will see two warships being built in Russia and two by the Goa Shipyard Ltd.

Significant as these may seem, Russia's footprint in the Indian defence market has dwindled in recent years with the entry of the United States. A March 2021 report by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute said that while India accounted for 23 per cent of Russia's total arms exports in 2015-2020, this was a 22 per cent reduction in arms sales to India compared to 2011-2015.

**BOTH COUNTRIES ARE COUNTING** on joint ventures to knit their military industrial complexes together and deepen the defence relationship. India does not have a similar relationship with any other country. The 23-year old Indo-Russian BrahMos Corporation, which produces the eponymous supersonic cruise missile, is a model for two other projects: Indo-Russian Helicopters to produce the Ka-226 and Indo-Russian Rifles, which will produce the AK-203 assault rifles. The Ak-203 will not only replace the army's INSAS and East European AK-type rifles, it will be the Indian infantry soldier's main rifle for over a decade. Yet, the bonhomie has not prevented Russian deals from being subject to enhanced scrutiny by India's ministry of defence (MoD).

The MoD wants Russia to transfer critical technologies to allow its industry to become self-sufficient. In 2018, India pulled the plug on a joint venture to produce a fifth generation fighter, the Sukhoi Su-57, because it was unhappy with the low level of technology being shared. A joint venture to manufacture 200 Kamov Ka-226 helicopters could face a similar fate. It has been held up for three years because the MoD wants Russia to boost the indigenous content in the machine to 70 per cent for all helicopters.

The deal to produce AK-203 assault rifles is held up because the Russian side insisted on a price of over $1,200 per rifle—at least $200 more than the cost of an imported US-made SiG 716 battle rifle which the army also uses. Indian officials want Russia's Kalashnikov company to transfer both the knowhow and the know-why of the legendary weapon. The relationship with Russia will continue, but it clearly won't be an unequal one. ■

EV brand
S1, S1 Pro
Manufactured by
Ola Electric
Price (ex-showroom)
Around Rs 1 lakh (S1); around Rs 1.3 lakh (S1 Pro)

SANDESH RAVIKUMAR

**RIDING HIGH**
Ola Electric CEO Bhavish Agarwal at the launch of their e-scooter in Bengaluru on August 15

# THE E-SCOOTY RIDES INTO TOWN

***They are hot, good-looking and promise to be cheaper to maintain. The arrival of trendy two-wheeler EVs perks up the segment***

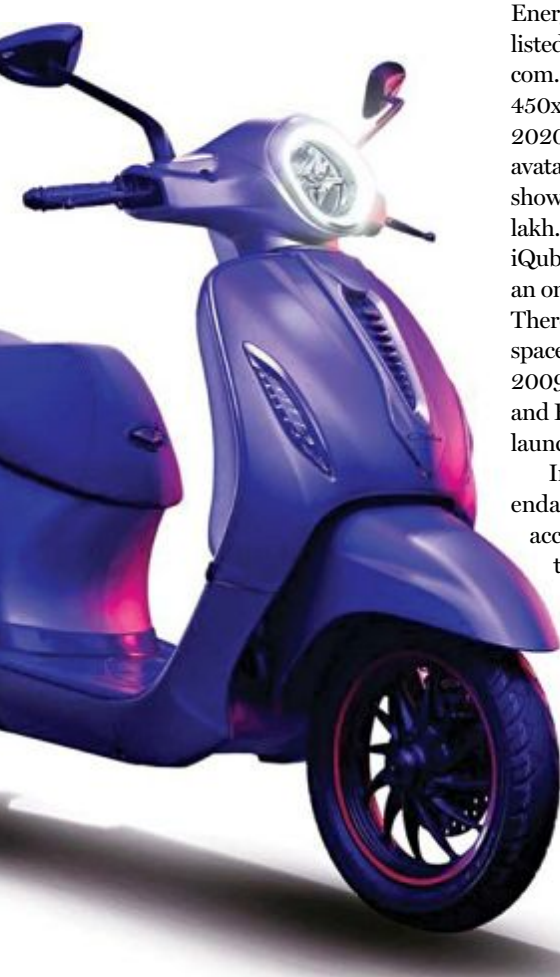
BY M.G. ARUN

For the past three years, the two-wheeler electric vehicle (EV) segment in India has been largely quiet, barring some big two-wheeler players announcing plans and the launch of the Ather 450 in Bengaluru in September 2018 after much delay, Bajaj Auto's resuscitated Chetak scooters and TVS Motor's iQube electric scooter. That changed this August with the high-decibel launch of the Ola electric scooter by the Indian taxi aggregator. Its Rs 1 lakh price tag places it as a stiff rival to incumbent manufacturers of internal combustion engine (ICE) two-wheelers in a highly-price sensitive Indian market.

With the launch of Ola's S1 and S2 Pro, for which pre-launch bookings had already begun, there will now be four home-bred

EV brand
Chetak
Manufactured by
Bajaj Auto
Price
(ex-showroom)
Around Rs 2 lakh

**BY JULY 19 THIS YEAR, INDIA HAD REGISTERED 104,806 EVs, INCLUDING CARS AND TWO-WHEELERS**



e-scooter makers in India. Rival Ather Energy's scooters start at Rs 1.13 lakh, as listed on two-wheeler portal bikedekho.com. The premium range of the Ather 450x costs Rs 1.32 lakh. In January 2020, Bajaj Auto launched the electric avatar of its Chetak scooter at an ex-showroom price range beginning Rs 1 lakh. TVS Motor, which launched its iQube e-scooter in July, reportedly has an on-road price of around Rs 1.23 lakh. There have been other start-ups in this space, such as Tork Motors (around since 2009), UltraViolette, Orxa Energies and Emflux Motors, but they have yet to launch any vehicle on a commercial scale.

In the first six months of this calendar year, only 52,000 e-scooters, accounting for just 0.7 per cent of the total two-wheeler segment, were sold in India. For 2020-21, sales of e-scooters fell 6 per cent to 143,837 units compared to 152,000 units in the previous year, according to the Society of Manufacturers of Electric Vehicles. Experts attribute the low traction in the e-scooter segment to their high price vis-a-vis the ICE counterparts, doubts over their sturdiness and longevity, absence of a ubiquitous charging infrastructure and the lack of a strong financing mechanism. Moreover, although many states have rolled out their EV policy, some are yet to implement it. According to ministry of heavy industries data, 104,806 EVs, including two-wheelers and cars, had been registered in the country till July 19 this year. In all, 517,322 EVs have been registered in the country over the past three years as per the e-vahan portal.

## BUILDING CURIOSITY

Despite the low sales numbers, EVs are generating a buzz because of the curiosity element, central and state government EV policies and rising fuel prices. Before the advent of Ather and now Ola, start-up e-scooter entrepreneurs who sold selectively to some corporate clients imported EV kits from China and assembled them here. However, they lacked the wherewithal and the skill to launch EVs in the market, say experts. The incumbent players, on the other hand,

EV brand
iQube
Manufactured by
TVS Motor
Company
On road price
Around Rs 1.2 lakh

were content with their strategies for traditional vehicles, which continued to help them post large sales numbers. Although the pandemic led to a 3 per cent fall in overall two-wheeler sales in fiscal 2020-21 over the previous fiscal, sales had picked up substantially in the second half of the year. Consequently, 17.6 million two-wheelers were sold in India in fiscal 2021 compared to 18.2 million in fiscal 2020.

Experts identify three key elements for an EV strategy to succeed. "First, customers have to be ready to pay more upfront. Second, start-up companies in the sector need to be prepared for big losses initially. Third, the government has to provide certain subsidies to help both EV makers and buyers," says Ravi Bhatia, president and director of the auto intelligence firm Dynamics India.

It is happening in India to some extent. Big funds from private equity players have ensured that players like Ather and Ola tide over the initial tough period when investments exceed returns. Ola's recent entry has created a new hype around the segment. Petrol prices have crossed the Rs 100 mark in most cities, and both the central and state governments are reluctant to scale down fuel taxes as they are a huge revenue source. This is likely to encourage buyers to look at alternatives like EVs. A few government policies have also given the sector a boost. Six years ago, the Centre formulated a scheme for faster adoption and manufacturing of hybrid & electric vehicles (FAME) in India. Phase II of the scheme, which started on April 1, 2019, is being implemented for five years with a budgetary support of Rs 10,000 crore. In June this year, the Department of Heavy Industries made certain modifications to the FAME-II scheme. Purchase incentives for e-scooters were increased by 50 per cent to Rs 15,000 per kWh (kilowatt hour) of battery capacity. The limit on this incentive was also relaxed from 20 per cent of the ex-showroom price to 40 per cent.

The Centre has taken other initiatives to promote EVs in the country. In May 2021, it approved a production linked incentive scheme for making advanced chemistry cells at home, to reduce battery prices. The Centre has also reduced GST (Goods & Services Tax) on EVs from 12 to 5 per cent. Earlier, the road transport and highways ministry had announced that battery-operated vehicles will be given green licence plates and exemption from permit requirements. A notification advising states to waive road tax on EVs was also issued.

## SUSTAINING THE BUZZ

The EV potential has manufacturers excited. "This EV revolution is a revolution quite literally—it is not about taking the engine out and putting the motor in," Ola founder and CEO Bhavish Agarwal said in a recent media interview. He wants the auto industry to reject petrol and diesel vehicles and make a complete switch to two-wheeler EVs by 2025. But experts say this is easier said than done. The initial enthusiasm around EVs may not sustain unless product prices remain low. That will happen only if India reduces its dependence on imports of EV parts and makes them indigenously, especially the vehicle's powertrain (which includes critical parts such as the engine, transmission, axles and so on). India has relied heavily on China for batteries and other components.

Though start-up entrepreneurs are enthusiastic about their prospects, it's a matter of time before incumbents step up their presence and make the EV market highly competitive given their deep pockets, infrastructure and distribution network. "Incumbents like Bajaj Auto and Hero Motocorp are watching the game," says Bhatia. "If the EV business becomes a runaway success, they will get into it in a major way." Apart from its Chetak EV, Bajaj Auto has announced the launch of electric three wheelers and quadricycles in 2021-22. Its premium bike brand KTM is also reportedly working on a range of e-motorbikes, which could be introduced in India. Rivals Hero MotoCorp and TVS Motor Company have already announced dedicated facilities and investment for EVs.

Not to be left behind, Ather and Ola Electric have raised $130 million and $326 million, respectively. They are also pump-priming their production capabilities. While Ather's new production facility can produce 110,000 scooters and 120,000 battery packs a year, Ola Electric's Future Factory aims to make 10 million e-scooters a year by 2022.

The battle of the e-scooters has just begun. The hype apart, companies will have to convince ICE vehicle users about EV affordability, durability and design. They may not pose a challenge to ICE vehicles yet, but before long the upstart may become the trendy alternative. ■

INDIA TODAY

# TOP COLLEGES OF NORTH INDIA

## ARTS, SCIENCE, COMMERCE, MEDICAL, ENGINEERING, ARCHITECTURE, LAW, BBA AND BCA

## INDIA TODAY–MDRA BEST COLLEGES SURVEY, 2021

*Illustration by* NILANJAN DAS

# BEST COLLEGES OF NORTH INDIA

Speaking at a function in August to mark five years of IIM-Jammu, Union minister Jitendra Singh said the region had fast emerged as a hub of higher education. Students from neighbouring states are flocking to the Union territory's higher education institutes. And Jammu is not alone. Several north Indian cities have emerged as attractive higher education destinations in recent times. With seven institutes of national importance, Uttar Pradesh too occupies a significant position in the higher education map of India. While these have been organic developments, there is a need now to make concerted efforts to identify and connect various cities with educational infrastructure for higher student mobility and access. In the 2021 budget, Union finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced that nine cities will have "higher education clusters" for better coordination among institutions and collective growth. The India Today rankings of the top colleges of north India are an endeavour to highlight cities in the region that are gaining popularity as higher education hot spots. These rankings across nine streams—arts, science, commerce, medical, engineering, architecture, law, BBA and BCA—have been derived from the 2021 India Today Best Colleges rankings prepared in association with Marketing and Development Research Associates (MDRA).

## STREAM-WISE RESULTS

### ARTS

RANKS & SCORES OF COLLEGES

| NORTH ZONE RANK 2021 | COLLEGE & CITY | INTAKE QUALITY & GOVERNANCE | ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE | INFRASTRUCTURE & LIVING EXPERIENCE | PERSONALITY & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT | CAREER PROGRESSION & PLACEMENT | OBJECTIVE SCORE | PERCEPTUAL SCORE | OVERALL SCORE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 250 | 250 | 150 | 200 | 150 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 2,000 |
| 1 | HINDU COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 215.9 | 190.5 | 122.1 | 170.5 | 145.0 | 844.0 | 999.1 | 1,843.1 |
| 2 | ST. STEPHEN'S COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 206.8 | 177.2 | 129.9 | 180.3 | 131.8 | 826.0 | 996.5 | 1,822.5 |
| 3 | MIRANDA HOUSE, NEW DELHI | 204.2 | 184.4 | 112.9 | 170.4 | 131.6 | 803.5 | 988.5 | 1,792.0 |
| 4 | LADY SHRI RAM COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, NEW DELHI | 197.8 | 175.7 | 92.7 | 160.6 | 137.6 | 764.4 | 993.0 | 1,757.4 |
| 5 | HANSRAJ COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 194.2 | 173.6 | 92.4 | 131.2 | 124.9 | 716.3 | 991.2 | 1,707.5 |
| 6 | GARGI COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 187.9 | 156.3 | 79.9 | 137.3 | 110.3 | 671.7 | 953.5 | 1,625.2 |
| 7 | RAMJAS COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 158.4 | 156.3 | 94.3 | 114.3 | 105.3 | 628.6 | 982.2 | 1,610.8 |
| 8 | ATMA RAM SANATAN DHARMA COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 177.5 | 179.5 | 82.7 | 124.7 | 101.1 | 665.5 | 931.3 | 1,596.8 |
| 9 | SRI VENKATESWARA COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 178.1 | 142.3 | 71.8 | 124.6 | 100.9 | 617.7 | 928.4 | 1,546.1 |
| 10 | DAULAT RAM COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 175.6 | 161.6 | 79.5 | 106.4 | 102.3 | 625.4 | 905.9 | 1,531.3 |
| 11 | MAHARAJA AGRASEN COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 162.0 | 167.0 | 84.3 | 141.3 | 93.5 | 648.1 | 812.0 | 1,460.1 |
| 12 | MAITREYI COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 173.9 | 125.5 | 78.6 | 121.6 | 91.5 | 591.1 | 843.1 | 1,434.2 |
| 13 | MEHR CHAND MAHAJAN DAV COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, CHANDIGARH | 163.8 | 126.8 | 82.8 | 91.0 | 102.9 | 567.3 | 865.3 | 1,432.6 |
| 14 | LAKSHMIBAI COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 135.3 | 155.6 | 64.7 | 117.3 | 103.1 | 576.0 | 816.8 | 1,392.8 |
| 15 | DAV COLLEGE, SEC-10, CHANDIGARH | 168.9 | 126.5 | 79.9 | 87.7 | 83.6 | 546.6 | 830.0 | 1,376.6 |
| 16 | GOSWAMI GANESH DUTTA S.D. COLLEGE, CHANDIGARH | 139.8 | 120.2 | 87.6 | 101.7 | 118.7 | 568.0 | 788.7 | 1,356.7 |
| 17 | SHIVAJI COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 170.8 | 155.0 | 79.2 | 98.8 | 88.8 | 592.6 | 720.3 | 1,312.9 |
| 18 | ISABELLA THOBURN COLLEGE, LUCKNOW | 166.4 | 130.7 | 78.0 | 113.2 | 98.2 | 586.5 | 714.2 | 1,300.7 |
| 19 | POST GRADUATE GOVERNMENT COLLEGE FOR GIRLS, CHANDIGARH | 155.1 | 138.1 | 84.0 | 108.0 | 91.3 | 576.5 | 694.5 | 1,271.0 |
| 20 | S.S. JAIN SUBODH PG (AUTONOMOUS) COLLEGE, JAIPUR | 169.5 | 147.8 | 82.5 | 91.6 | 106.0 | 597.4 | 641.2 | 1,238.6 |
| 21 | FACULTY OF ARTS, ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY, ALIGARH | 138.4 | 159.9 | 110.5 | 86.5 | 95.7 | 591.0 | 637.1 | 1,228.1 |
| 22 | RAMANUJAN COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 176.1 | 171.2 | 72.2 | 126.6 | 84.7 | 630.8 | 490.5 | 1,121.3 |
| 23 | APEEJAY COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS, JALANDHAR | 133.5 | 136.7 | 77.6 | 122.8 | 99.3 | 569.9 | 477.5 | 1,047.4 |
| 24 | BHARATI COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 162.9 | 133.4 | 68.0 | 103.9 | 97.5 | 565.7 | 387.1 | 952.8 |
| 25 | KESHAV MAHAVIDYALAYA, NEW DELHI | 151.4 | 56.6 | 102.1 | 59.9 | 37.5 | 407.5 | 496.6 | 904.1 |

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CAREER 360 Ranked 4th Pvt. College in 2019
OUTLOOK Magazine Rank 6th (in Pvt. Colleges) 2021

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TRUSTED HOSPITAL 2020 — Reader's Digest

**The first medical college for women in Asia established in 1894**

**Comprehensive Cancer Care Hospital**

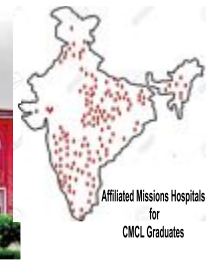
**One of 4 FAIMER regional centres in India an among 10 in the world.**

**The first use of IV thrombolytic therapy for acute stroke in India.**

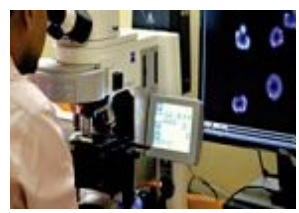
**Florescent In-Situ Hybirdization (FISH) first in Punjab.**

**First Bone Marrow Transplant Centre in Punjab.**

**Over 150 Transplant has done in the 10 years.**



Improving Medical Education - Improving Global Health
FAIMER
CMCL-FAIMER Regional Institute, Ludhiana



YEARS OF HEALING — MINISTRY & EDUCATION — 125 — CHRISTIAN MEDICAL COLLEGE LUDHIANA

**MBBS/BDS/MDS/MD/MS/DM/M.Ch Programmes Admission through NEET**

- A balanced academic co-curricular activities with a thriving student nurture programme and 24 x 7 Student Support Center.
- Students and Faculty from every corner of India.
- Tele medicine consultation with Cleveland Clinic USA.
- Over 80% of graduates serve needy communities through 145 rural hospitals
- Graduate selected for higher studies in Top foreign universities e.g. Johns Hopkins, Mayo Clinic, Cleveland Clinic,
- Medical Ethics is part of the curriculum since 1987.
- Graduates selected for higher studies in Top foreign universities e.g. Johns Hopkins, Mayo Clinic, Cleveland Clinic, MD Anderson Cancer Center, University of California.
- A strong alumni network on every continent.

## CONSTITUENT COLLEGES

Christian Dental College, Est. 1992
College of Nursing, Est. 1888
College of Physiotherapy, Est. 2006
Institute of Allied Health Sciences, Est. 2007

# BEST COLLEGES OF NORTH INDIA

## ARTS

RANKS & SCORES OF COLLEGES

| NORTH ZONE RANK 2021 | COLLEGE & CITY | INTAKE QUALITY & GOVERNANCE | ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE | INFRASTRUCTURE & LIVING EXPERIENCE | PERSONALITY & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT | CAREER PROGRESSION & PLACEMENT | OBJECTIVE SCORE | PERCEPTUAL SCORE | OVERALL SCORE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 250 | 250 | 150 | 200 | 150 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 2,000 |
| 26 | ST WILFRED'S PG COLLEGE, JAIPUR | 112.3 | 149.5 | 94.7 | 125.4 | 107.1 | 589.0 | 246.6 | 835.6 |
| 27 | KANYA MAHA VIDYALAYA, JALANDHAR | 144.2 | 136.5 | 100.8 | 98.9 | 56.4 | 536.8 | 274.5 | 811.3 |
| 28 | AMITY SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS, NOIDA | 90.1 | 144.8 | 91.2 | 102.2 | 89.2 | 517.5 | 290.9 | 808.4 |
| 29 | DAV COLLEGE, HOSHIARPUR | 130.4 | 147.2 | 99.2 | 97.5 | 76.4 | 550.7 | 233.8 | 784.5 |
| 30 | DAV COLLEGE, ABOHAR, ABOHAR | 136.6 | 125.7 | 82.0 | 72.8 | 63.1 | 480.2 | 303.5 | 783.7 |
| 31 | DESHBANDHU COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 138.7 | 120.9 | 65.1 | 87.0 | 69.7 | 481.4 | 285.8 | 767.2 |
| 32 | AMITY SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS, GURUGRAM | 114.4 | 163.8 | 104.0 | 118.4 | 71.1 | 571.7 | 193.7 | 765.4 |
| 33 | GOPICHAND ARYA MAHILA COLLEGE, ABOHAR | 126.5 | 80.1 | 62.2 | 57.2 | 65.1 | 391.1 | 345.1 | 736.2 |
| 34 | BBK DAV COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, AMRITSAR | 117.0 | 104.1 | 91.3 | 90.5 | 55.9 | 458.8 | 178.9 | 637.7 |
| 35 | AVADH GIRLS' P.G. COLLEGE, LUCKNOW | 136.2 | 124.3 | 62.5 | 85.1 | 79.2 | 487.3 | 150.2 | 637.5 |
| 36 | FACULTY OF ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES, IIS (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), JAIPUR | 130.7 | 152.8 | 105.4 | 115.5 | 76.1 | 580.5 | 51.8 | 632.3 |
| 37 | DAV COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, FEROZEPUR CANTT, FEROZEPUR | 122.5 | 116.9 | 39.2 | 48.4 | 90.2 | 417.2 | 210.4 | 627.6 |
| 38 | RAMA PG COLLEGE, LUCKNOW | 109.4 | 35.6 | 60.2 | 57.3 | 44.4 | 306.9 | 232.5 | 539.4 |
| 39 | PARISHKAR COLLEGE OF GLOBAL EXCELLENCE, JAIPUR | 93.3 | 123.3 | 52.9 | 117.0 | 88.0 | 474.5 | 27.6 | 502.1 |
| 40 | BEBE NANAKI UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, MITHRA, KAPURTHALA | 96.9 | 93.3 | 40.0 | 45.1 | 16.9 | 292.2 | 0.0 | 292.2 |

## SCIENCE

RANKS & SCORES OF COLLEGES

| NORTH ZONE RANK 2021 | COLLEGE & CITY | INTAKE QUALITY & GOVERNANCE | ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE | INFRASTRUCTURE & LIVING EXPERIENCE | PERSONALITY & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT | CAREER PROGRESSION & PLACEMENT | OBJECTIVE SCORE | PERCEPTUAL SCORE | OVERALL SCORE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 250 | 250 | 175 | 175 | 150 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 2,000 |
| 1 | HINDU COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 221.0 | 209.0 | 138.6 | 130.9 | 147.7 | 847.2 | 1,000.0 | 1,847.2 |
| 2 | MIRANDA HOUSE, NEW DELHI | 216.6 | 207.2 | 133.8 | 138.4 | 145.3 | 841.3 | 996.0 | 1,837.3 |
| 3 | ST. STEPHEN'S COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 196.0 | 195.2 | 142.0 | 136.3 | 142.0 | 811.5 | 989.1 | 1,800.6 |
| 4 | HANSRAJ COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 215.1 | 182.8 | 110.5 | 113.5 | 127.9 | 749.8 | 991.4 | 1,741.2 |
| 5 | DAULAT RAM COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 192.5 | 171.4 | 120.3 | 119.7 | 100.5 | 704.4 | 973.2 | 1,677.6 |
| 6 | SRI VENKATESWARA COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 180.7 | 150.8 | 104.9 | 121.4 | 109.2 | 667.0 | 970.9 | 1,637.9 |
| 7 | DEEN DAYAL UPADHYAYA COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 171.9 | 164.1 | 114.8 | 111.0 | 118.9 | 680.7 | 956.3 | 1,637.0 |
| 8 | GARGI COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 183.6 | 175.2 | 108.6 | 105.1 | 105.9 | 678.4 | 956.3 | 1,634.7 |
| 9 | LADY SHRI RAM COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, NEW DELHI | 187.0 | 164.2 | 105.9 | 155.7 | 111.7 | 724.5 | 902.3 | 1,626.8 |
| 10 | ATMA RAM SANATAN DHARMA COLLEGE (ARSD COLLEGE), NEW DELHI | 188.4 | 175.7 | 90.9 | 114.6 | 134.0 | 703.6 | 908.3 | 1,611.9 |
| 11 | RAMJAS COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 158.5 | 153.6 | 110.8 | 108.1 | 114.1 | 645.1 | 958.0 | 1,603.1 |
| 12 | ACHARYA NARENDRA DEV COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 182.3 | 166.8 | 80.4 | 104.4 | 116.0 | 649.9 | 905.9 | 1,555.8 |
| 13 | MAHARAJA AGRASEN COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 166.2 | 166.0 | 111.0 | 120.5 | 97.8 | 661.5 | 869.2 | 1,530.7 |
| 14 | GOSWAMI GANESH DUTTA SANATAN DHARMA COLLEGE, CHANDIGARH | 167.6 | 171.0 | 123.9 | 105.5 | 95.1 | 663.1 | 839.5 | 1,502.6 |
| 15 | MEHR CHAND MAHAJAN DAV COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, CHANDIGARH | 172.3 | 152.8 | 108.2 | 86.7 | 111.7 | 631.7 | 840.6 | 1,472.3 |
| 16 | SHIVAJI COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 177.9 | 135.2 | 102.9 | 89.0 | 105.3 | 610.3 | 828.2 | 1,438.5 |
| 17 | MAITREYI COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 167.6 | 171.0 | 106.1 | 120.6 | 85.1 | 650.4 | 760.2 | 1,410.6 |
| 18 | DAV COLLEGE, SECTOR-10, CHANDIGARH, CHANDIGARH | 165.5 | 137.7 | 119.2 | 76.4 | 94.7 | 593.5 | 813.4 | 1,406.9 |

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* Under approval

# MUD FUTURES July 2021 – March 2022

## A Global Multi-Location Multi-host Conclave onthe Futures of Mud in Architecture

Conclave Chair: Dr Vibhuti Sachdev
Conclave Directors: Prof Amrita Madan and Himanshu Sanghani

**iPAC 2021-2022:** Mud Futures is a global year-long multi-host multi-location conclave on the futures of mud in architecture conceptualised and conducted by the School of Art and Architecture, Sushant University (SAA, SU). The conclave is an opportunity for an international platform for ideas, thoughts, research and architectural projects centred around mud. Here, mud is considered as a material, as an approach, as a vehicle for sustainability, and as the source of an ideological imperative for the future of the built environment.

The current global scenario has triggered extensive debates on not only our future as a sustainable global economy but also on the need to return to our 'origins'. For aficionados of the built environment, this need translates into material, constructional, technological, and systemic evocations. We are bound to ask questions that look into the future; How should we build, What should we build, What should we build with, Who should we build with?

**iPAC 2021-2022: Mud Futures** brings together various institutions, experts and practitioners from across the world to discuss its origin, transformation and advancement as a quantifiable property. There will be several events taking place to delve into three larger themes: Origin, Transfer and Motor; and each theme has its own sub-themes to deeply understand mud.

The conclave will have conferences, seminars, research projects, conversations, workshops, certificate courses, pedagogic interconnections, faculty development seminars and many more platforms to delve into three larger thematic tracks:

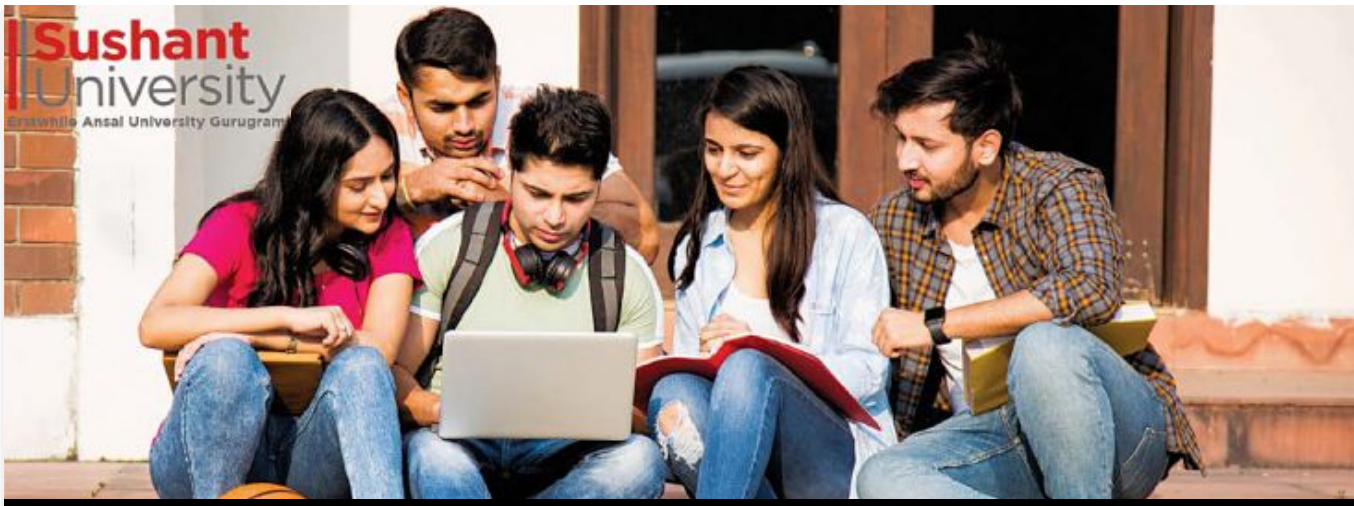
**- Origin (July-September 2021):** The thematic track 'Origin' traces the influence of mud on architectural processes. The discussion aims to look beyond nostalgia of past and explore the urban use of mud, rooted in its indigenous systems.

**- Transfer (October-December 2021):** The thematic track "transfer" engages with the ways in which propagation of knowledge happens into varied settings of the world in a multi-dimensional manner. Through a nuanced exploration of the proponents, knowledge and values associated with mud, it brings into consideration the cross-population of unique systems and identities.

**- Motor (January-March 2022):** The thematic track, 'motor' focuses on the various impetus or catalysts that are likely to drive change in the urban environment. Events, movements, academic and popular thoughts, have the ability to propagate the use of earth as the cardinal construction material in the future, acting as agents of 'mudification'.

Each thematic track is spread over three months. Themes have been intricately woven to incorporate attitudes, methods, practices, research, philosophy, approaches, popular cultures and human interactions to deeply understand mud.

***Upcoming Sub-theme:* Mud-Highbrow : 24th - 25th September 2021**
***https://ipac.page/mudfutures/***

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**B.Sc**
- Cardiovascular Technology
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- Medical Laboratory Technology
- Psychology
- Medical Radiology & Imaging Technology

**Bachelor of Pharmacy**
**(Approved by Pharmacy Council)**
**Bachelors of Optometry(BOPTOM)**
**M.Sc**
- Cardiovascular Technology
- Clinical Research (ICRI)
- Pschology

**Masters in MLT**
Medical Radiology & Imaging Technology
**Master of Public Health (ICRI)**
**Moptom** (Masters in Optometry)
**Masters in Optometry**
(Practice & Research)
**Ph.D**
- Health Sciences (Optometry, Psychology)
- Pharmaceutical Sciences

## School of Business

**B.Com (H)**
**B.Com (H)** Strategic Finance (CIMA/ CMA/ ACCA)
**B.Com (H) Professional**
**BBA (H)** in Collaboration with Warwick University, UK
**BBA (H)** (Business Analytics) in collaboration with upGrad
**BBA (H)** Digital Marketing in collaboration with upGrad
**BBA (H)** Fintech **MBA** in Collaboration with Warwick University, UK
**MBA** (Business Analytics & Intelligence) in collaboration with upGrad
**MBA** (Digital Marketing) in collaboration with upGrad
**MBA** (Fintech)
**Ph.D** (Management)

## School of Design

**B.Des**
- Animation and VFX, Communication Design
- Fashion and Textiles, Interior Architecture, Interior Design
- Product Design, UX Design

**M.Des**
- Interior Design, Transportation & Mobility Design
- UX Design

**1-Year Diploma** (AR/VR/MR)
**PhD** (Design)

## School of Engineering & Technology

**B.Tech**
- CE with Specialization in Smart Cities
- CSE with Specialization (AI & ML, Cyber Security Full Stack Development)
- ECE with Specialization in 5G and IoT
- EE with specialization in Renewable Energy
- ME with Specialization in Digital Manufacturing

**M.Tech**
- CE (Construction Management, Environmental Engineering, Smart Cities & Management, Structure Engineering)
- CSE in AI & Machine Learning
- ME ( Robotics)

**Ph.D**
- Chemistry/Mathematics/Physics/Civil Engineering/ Computer Science & Engineering/ Electrical Engineering/Electronics & Communication Engineering/Mechanical Engineering

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**(with Vatel Hospitality, France)**
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**PhD** (Hospitality Management)

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**B.Plan**
Bachelor of Planning
**M.Plan**
Policy & Governance/ Transport Planning/Urban Planning
**Dual Degree**
Master of Planning (Integrated)
**Ph.D** (Planning & Public Policy)

## School of Law

**BA - LLB (Hons.)**
**BBA - LLB (Hons.)**
**LLB (Hons.)**
**LLM** ( 1 year programme approved by UGC)
**PhD** (Law)

## School of Art & Architecture

**B.Arch** (Bachelor of Architecture)
B.Sc (Building Projects)
**BFA** (Bachelors of Fine Arts-Applied Arts)
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# BEST COLLEGES OF NORTH INDIA

## SCIENCE

RANKS & SCORES OF COLLEGES

| NORTH ZONE RANK 2021 | COLLEGE & CITY | INTAKE QUALITY & GOVERNANCE | ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE | INFRASTRUCTURE & LIVING EXPERIENCE | PERSONALITY & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT | CAREER PROGRESSION & PLACEMENT | OBJECTIVE SCORE | PERCEPTUAL SCORE | OVERALL SCORE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 250 | 250 | 175 | 175 | 150 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 2,000 |
| 19 | POST GRADUATE GOVERNMENT COLLEGE FOR GIRLS, CHANDIGARH | 169.4 | 140.5 | 90.6 | 83.4 | 117.7 | 601.6 | 798.0 | 1,399.6 |
| 20 | ISABELLA THOBURN COLLEGE, LUCKNOW | 170.8 | 135.4 | 107.2 | 102.6 | 98.7 | 614.7 | 730.6 | 1,345.3 |
| 21 | KESHAV MAHAVIDYALAYA, NEW DELHI | 150.4 | 89.6 | 93.2 | 78.2 | 119.8 | 531.2 | 804.7 | 1,335.9 |
| 22 | S.S. JAIN SUBODH P.G. COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), JAIPUR | 182.7 | 153.6 | 83.5 | 65.1 | 104.0 | 588.9 | 746.5 | 1,335.4 |
| 23 | DESHBANDHU COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 162.5 | 158.8 | 79.7 | 63.1 | 81.0 | 545.1 | 786.3 | 1,331.4 |
| 24 | LAKSHMIBAI COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 145.8 | 158.8 | 117.3 | 86.7 | 109.5 | 618.1 | 708.1 | 1,326.2 |
| 25 | ST WILFRED'S PG COLLEGE, JAIPUR | 116.3 | 164.8 | 125.0 | 88.3 | 108.7 | 603.1 | 716.1 | 1,319.2 |
| 26 | BHASKARACHARYA COLLEGE OF APPLIED SCIENCES, NEW DELHI | 158.7 | 179.2 | 72.5 | 91.8 | 79.6 | 581.8 | 606.0 | 1,187.8 |
| 27 | AMITY INSTITUTE OF APPLIED SCIENCES, NOIDA | 110.4 | 170.2 | 141.0 | 101.3 | 100.9 | 623.8 | 484.1 | 1,107.9 |
| 28 | PODDAR INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE, JAIPUR | 114.5 | 157.5 | 115.2 | 106.8 | 81.8 | 575.8 | 523.4 | 1,099.2 |
| 29 | AMITY SCHOOL OF APPLIED SCIENCES, GURUGRAM | 109.2 | 197.8 | 142.6 | 104.1 | 86.7 | 640.4 | 439.8 | 1,080.2 |
| 30 | KANYA MAHA VIDYALAYA (AUTONOMOUS), JALANDHAR | 170.6 | 162.3 | 114.2 | 105.5 | 74.3 | 626.9 | 312.3 | 939.2 |
| 31 | DAV COLLEGE, ABOHAR | 152.0 | 163.3 | 113.3 | 79.5 | 81.0 | 589.1 | 330.4 | 919.5 |
| 32 | BBK DAV COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, AMRITSAR | 143.6 | 132.3 | 94.3 | 99.3 | 74.5 | 544.0 | 356.9 | 900.9 |
| 33 | SCHOOL OF LIFE & BASIC SCIENCES, JAIPUR NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, JAIPUR | 129.2 | 154.5 | 119.3 | 126.5 | 81.7 | 611.2 | 213.3 | 824.5 |
| 34 | DAV CENTENARY COLLEGE, FARIDABAD | 145.0 | 113.6 | 82.4 | 78.8 | 67.0 | 486.8 | 335.8 | 822.6 |
| 35 | D. A. V. COLLEGE, HOSHIARPUR | 137.3 | 135.3 | 115.4 | 86.0 | 77.8 | 551.8 | 249.7 | 801.5 |
| 36 | FACULTY OF SCIENCES, IIS (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), JAIPUR | 149.2 | 179.7 | 130.6 | 108.0 | 70.9 | 638.4 | 84.0 | 722.4 |
| 37 | SANATAN DHARMA COLLEGE, AMBALA CANTT | 113.7 | 66.3 | 31.2 | 63.7 | 62.2 | 337.1 | 382.2 | 719.3 |
| 38 | AMITY INSTITUTE OF BIOTECHNOLOGY, LUCKNOW | 97.4 | 175.8 | 142.4 | 13.0 | 89.8 | 518.4 | 187.7 | 706.1 |
| 39 | JAGDISH CHANDRA DAV COLLEGE, DASUYA | 118.8 | 112.7 | 90.1 | 55.2 | 70.2 | 447.0 | 204.8 | 651.8 |
| 40 | PARISHKAR COLLEGE OF GLOBAL EXCELLENCE, JAIPUR | 88.4 | 105.0 | 62.7 | 63.8 | 83.1 | 403.0 | 172.5 | 575.5 |
| 41 | UTTARANCHAL INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT, DEHRADUN | 54.0 | 132.2 | 140.1 | 96.4 | 110.3 | 533.0 | 0.0 | 533.0 |
| 42 | BEBE NANAKI UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, MITHRA, KAPURTHALA | 37.9 | 49.2 | 60.9 | 52.6 | 80.5 | 281.1 | 16.8 | 297.9 |

## COMMERCE

RANKS & SCORES OF COLLEGES

| NORTH ZONE RANK 2021 | COLLEGE & CITY | INTAKE QUALITY & GOVERNANCE | ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE | INFRASTRUCTURE & LIVING EXPERIENCE | PERSONALITY & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT | CAREER PROGRESSION & PLACEMENT | OBJECTIVE SCORE | PERCEPTUAL SCORE | OVERALL SCORE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 225 | 250 | 150 | 175 | 200 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 2,000 |
| 1 | SHRI RAM COLLEGE OF COMMERCE (SRCC), NEW DELHI | 191.3 | 199.8 | 132.7 | 157.9 | 181.3 | 863.0 | 1,000.0 | 1,863.0 |
| 2 | HINDU COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 189.8 | 192.4 | 133.6 | 147.5 | 190.6 | 853.9 | 996.1 | 1,850.0 |
| 3 | LADY SHRI RAM COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, NEW DELHI | 190.4 | 180.9 | 128.4 | 157.1 | 169.1 | 825.9 | 981.9 | 1,807.8 |
| 4 | HANSRAJ COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 200.0 | 172.2 | 110.5 | 143.4 | 170.6 | 796.7 | 992.5 | 1,789.2 |
| 5 | RAMJAS COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 155.4 | 173.4 | 111.9 | 119.9 | 142.7 | 703.3 | 975.8 | 1,679.1 |
| 6 | ATMA RAM SANATAN DHARMA COLLEGE (ARSD), NEW DELHI | 167.0 | 165.2 | 99.0 | 128.0 | 137.0 | 696.2 | 944.9 | 1,641.1 |
| 7 | DAULAT RAM COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 178.5 | 162.7 | 79.3 | 129.7 | 152.2 | 702.4 | 929.6 | 1,632.0 |
| 8 | GARGI COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 182.1 | 149.1 | 96.2 | 129.8 | 145.0 | 702.2 | 923.2 | 1,625.4 |
| 9 | SRI VENKATESWARA COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 174.4 | 124.9 | 96.3 | 124.3 | 151.5 | 671.4 | 945.5 | 1,616.9 |
| 10 | DEEN DAYAL UPADHYAYA COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 165.3 | 136.7 | 109.5 | 116.8 | 150.6 | 678.9 | 902.4 | 1,581.3 |

# BEST COLLEGES OF NORTH INDIA

## COMMERCE

RANKS & SCORES OF COLLEGES

| NORTH ZONE RANK 2021 | COLLEGE & CITY | INTAKE QUALITY & GOVERNANCE | ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE | INFRASTRUCTURE & LIVING EXPERIENCE | PERSONALITY & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT | CAREER PROGRESSION & PLACEMENT | OBJECTIVE SCORE | PERCEPTUAL SCORE | OVERALL SCORE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 225 | 250 | 150 | 175 | 200 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 2,000 |
| 11 | SRI GURU GOBIND SINGH COLLEGE OF COMMERCE, NEW DELHI | 163.9 | 185.4 | 93.6 | 128.8 | 127.5 | 699.2 | 830.4 | 1,529.6 |
| 12 | GOSWAMI GANESH DUTT SANATAN DHARMA COLLEGE, CHANDIGARH | 159.2 | 163.5 | 99.7 | 109.3 | 145.9 | 677.6 | 848.8 | 1,526.4 |
| 13 | SHIVAJI COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 164.6 | 133.0 | 96.2 | 102.0 | 131.4 | 627.2 | 871.8 | 1,499.0 |
| 14 | MAITREYI COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 175.0 | 125.9 | 108.8 | 132.1 | 128.0 | 669.8 | 817.6 | 1,487.4 |
| 15 | MAHARAJA AGRASEN COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 164.3 | 173.5 | 104.9 | 132.5 | 117.1 | 692.3 | 784.2 | 1,476.5 |
| 16 | ISABELLA THOBURN COLLEGE, LUCKNOW | 127.7 | 129.6 | 101.3 | 130.9 | 123.3 | 612.8 | 723.5 | 1,336.3 |
| 17 | LAKSHMIBAI COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 151.7 | 161.2 | 88.0 | 114.8 | 115.2 | 630.9 | 703.8 | 1,334.7 |
| 18 | RAMANUJAN COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 162.3 | 171.2 | 75.9 | 127.0 | 133.4 | 669.8 | 663.4 | 1,333.2 |
| 19 | BHARATI COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 157.4 | 124.9 | 78.6 | 108.9 | 112.8 | 582.6 | 716.2 | 1,298.8 |
| 20 | MEHR CHAND MAHAJAN DAV COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, CHANDIGARH | 145.5 | 117.6 | 80.1 | 111.4 | 119.0 | 573.6 | 698.9 | 1,272.5 |
| 21 | POST GRADUATE GOVERNMENT COLLEGE FOR GIRLS, CHANDIGARH | 149.2 | 141.8 | 94.8 | 70.8 | 112.0 | 568.6 | 669.1 | 1,237.7 |
| 22 | DAV COLLEGE, CHANDIGARH | 157.3 | 126.7 | 97.1 | 68.3 | 122.7 | 572.1 | 654.7 | 1,226.8 |
| 23 | AMITY COLLEGE OF COMMERCE AND FINANCE, NOIDA | 103.1 | 160.1 | 99.9 | 93.3 | 125.3 | 581.7 | 640.4 | 1,222.1 |
| 24 | S.S. JAIN SUBODH PG (AUTONOMOUS) COLLEGE, JAIPUR | 163.1 | 151.0 | 94.2 | 84.8 | 134.4 | 627.5 | 593.2 | 1,220.7 |
| 25 | DESHBANDHU COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 158.3 | 107.2 | 111.3 | 110.0 | 144.4 | 631.2 | 531.6 | 1,162.8 |
| 26 | JAGANNATH INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT SCHOOL, KALKAJI, NEW DELHI | 76.9 | 159.0 | 71.8 | 159.1 | 105.5 | 572.3 | 390.9 | 963.2 |
| 27 | BBK DAV COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, AMRITSAR | 125.8 | 90.0 | 76.1 | 98.5 | 95.2 | 485.6 | 471.9 | 957.5 |
| 28 | KESHAV MAHAVIDYALAYA, NEW DELHI | 155.7 | 74.6 | 74.8 | 40.6 | 72.7 | 418.4 | 529.6 | 948.0 |
| 29 | KANYA MAHA VIDYALAYA (AUTONOMOUS), JALANDHAR | 141.3 | 127.1 | 93.9 | 111.5 | 105.1 | 578.9 | 363.4 | 942.3 |
| 30 | HANS RAJ MAHILA MAHA VIDYALAYA, JALANDHAR | 130.2 | 133.4 | 84.5 | 101.6 | 151.6 | 601.3 | 330.4 | 931.7 |
| 31 | DAV COLLEGE, ABOHAR | 145.1 | 144.6 | 103.4 | 101.4 | 101.0 | 595.5 | 334.6 | 930.1 |
| 32 | VIVEKANANDA INSTITUTE OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES, NEW DELHI | 130.3 | 121.3 | 71.6 | 110.1 | 132.5 | 565.8 | 287.6 | 853.4 |
| 33 | D.A.V. COLLEGE, HOSHIARPUR | 138.7 | 153.2 | 95.0 | 101.8 | 119.1 | 607.8 | 203.4 | 811.2 |
| 34 | FMS-WISDOM, BANASTHALI VIDYAPITH, BANASTHALI | 120.6 | 185.6 | 114.9 | 108.5 | 108.1 | 637.7 | 100.5 | 738.2 |
| 35 | LINGAYA'S LALITA DEVI INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT & SCIENCES, NEW DELHI | 113.8 | 146.8 | 107.6 | 117.0 | 108.1 | 593.3 | 143.4 | 736.7 |
| 36 | APEEJAY COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS, JALANDHAR | 94.7 | 128.4 | 47.1 | 70.1 | 136.1 | 476.4 | 259.5 | 735.9 |
| 37 | UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, CHANDIGARH UNIVERSITY, MOHALI | 125.8 | 158.3 | 121.6 | 113.8 | 107.3 | 626.8 | 103.8 | 730.6 |
| 38 | SCHOOL OF BUSINESS & MANAGEMENT, JAIPUR NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, JAIPUR | 120.3 | 148.1 | 120.4 | 121.5 | 93.1 | 603.4 | 126.9 | 730.3 |
| 39 | PODDAR INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE, JAIPUR | 109.7 | 119.4 | 96.7 | 120.2 | 128.4 | 574.4 | 150.6 | 725.0 |
| 40 | SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, IMS UNISON UNIVERSITY, DEHRADUN | 63.4 | 164.6 | 108.3 | 103.0 | 133.8 | 573.1 | 132.4 | 705.5 |
| 41 | DEVKI DEVI JAIN MEMORIAL COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, LUDHIANA | 136.7 | 75.2 | 91.2 | 107.3 | 106.2 | 516.6 | 160.3 | 676.9 |
| 42 | DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, IIS (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), JAIPUR | 119.5 | 176.0 | 120.5 | 125.9 | 85.4 | 627.3 | 30.0 | 657.3 |
| 43 | SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT & COMMERCE, POORNIMA UNIVERSITY, JAIPUR | 93.9 | 140.1 | 123.4 | 118.3 | 112.5 | 588.2 | 63.4 | 651.6 |
| 44 | ST WIFRED'S PG COLLEGE, JAIPUR | 92.6 | 147.7 | 79.3 | 86.3 | 121.2 | 527.1 | 122.0 | 649.1 |
| 45 | AVADH GIRLS' DEGREE COLLEGE, LUCKNOW | 119.3 | 99.1 | 51.6 | 87.1 | 76.0 | 433.1 | 184.2 | 617.3 |
| 46 | PARISHKAR COLLEGE OF GLOBAL EXCELLENCE, JAIPUR | 118.3 | 150.9 | 86.9 | 129.3 | 120.3 | 605.7 | 3.4 | 609.1 |
| 47 | PUNJAB COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION, LUDHIANA | 88.0 | 144.4 | 108.4 | 109.7 | 82.0 | 532.5 | 49.7 | 582.2 |
| 48 | SANATAN DHARMA COLLEGE, AMBALA CANTT., AMBALA | 141.0 | 77.7 | 34.7 | 35.0 | 85.6 | 374.0 | 204.0 | 578.0 |
| 49 | UTTARANCHAL INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT, DEHRADUN | 81.8 | 137.8 | 123.0 | 100.4 | 96.5 | 539.5 | 31.1 | 570.6 |
| 50 | FACULTY OF COMMERCE AND BUSINESS MANAGEMENT, AMRAPALI GROUP OF INSTITUTES, HALDWANI | 79.7 | 145.3 | 102.7 | 98.3 | 113.9 | 539.9 | 0.0 | 539.9 |
| 51 | RAMA PG COLLEGE, LUCKNOW | 78.7 | 55.8 | 80.2 | 57.7 | 100.1 | 372.5 | 146.0 | 518.5 |
| 52 | BEBE NANAKI UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, KAPURTHALA | 66.0 | 85.2 | 46.8 | 46.7 | 61.2 | 305.9 | 0.0 | 305.9 |

# BEST COLLEGES OF NORTH INDIA

## MEDICAL

RANKS & SCORES OF COLLEGES

| NORTH ZONE RANK 2021 | COLLEGE & CITY | INTAKE QUALITY & GOVERNANCE | ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE | INFRASTRUCTURE & LIVING EXPERIENCE | PERSONALITY & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT | CAREER PROGRESSION & PLACEMENT | OBJECTIVE SCORE | PERCEPTUAL SCORE | OVERALL SCORE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 300 | 300 | 240 | 180 | 180 | 1,200 | 800 | 2,000 |
| 1 | ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), NEW DELHI | 282.2 | 276.3 | 214.3 | 153.9 | 173.7 | 1,100.4 | 800.0 | 1,900.4 |
| 2 | MAULANA AZAD MEDICAL COLLEGE (MAMC), NEW DELHI | 255.4 | 248.8 | 186.2 | 145.7 | 151.0 | 987.1 | 782.9 | 1,770.0 |
| 3 | INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY (BHU), VARANASI | 237.1 | 259.0 | 195.6 | 107.4 | 103.1 | 902.2 | 781.8 | 1,684.0 |
| 4 | KING GEORGE'S MEDICAL UNIVERSITY, LUCKNOW | 228.3 | 221.0 | 184.4 | 134.4 | 117.8 | 885.9 | 778.5 | 1,664.4 |
| 5 | VARDHMAN MAHAVIR MEDICAL COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 241.6 | 215.8 | 196.7 | 119.9 | 125.2 | 899.2 | 744.6 | 1,643.8 |
| 6 | LADY HARDINGE MEDICAL COLLEGE, NEW DELHI | 259.7 | 204.0 | 164.5 | 125.7 | 145.2 | 899.1 | 736.0 | 1,635.1 |
| 7 | UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, NEW DELHI | 259.3 | 200.4 | 179.9 | 123.9 | 120.1 | 883.6 | 730.5 | 1,614.1 |
| 8 | GOVERNMENT MEDICAL COLLEGE AND HOSPITAL (GMCH), CHANDIGARH | 214.3 | 198.9 | 182.6 | 118.0 | 93.2 | 807.0 | 685.8 | 1,492.8 |
| 9 | SAWAI MAN SINGH MEDICAL COLLEGE, JAIPUR | 221.7 | 215.6 | 149.4 | 139.5 | 84.5 | 810.7 | 681.7 | 1,492.4 |
| 10 | JAWAHARLAL NEHRU MEDICAL COLLEGE, ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY (AMU), ALIGARH | 221.1 | 195.2 | 173.6 | 144.6 | 103.0 | 837.5 | 644.0 | 1,481.5 |
| 11 | ALL INDIA INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES (AIIMS), JODHPUR | 210.3 | 209.8 | 181.7 | 110.0 | 90.8 | 802.6 | 575.4 | 1,378.0 |
| 12 | ARMY COLLEGE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, NEW DELHI | 142.3 | 186.9 | 166.9 | 122.9 | 123.7 | 742.7 | 621.2 | 1,363.9 |
| 13 | DAYANAND MEDICAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL, LUDHIANA | 195.9 | 223.9 | 155.6 | 120.3 | 78.0 | 773.7 | 577.2 | 1,350.9 |
| 14 | CHRISTIAN MEDICAL COLLEGE, LUDHIANA | 155.0 | 200.4 | 200.4 | 124.5 | 93.1 | 773.4 | 551.9 | 1,325.3 |
| 15 | ERA'S LUCKNOW MEDICAL COLLEGE & HOSPITAL, LUCKNOW | 139.8 | 201.7 | 185.1 | 133.2 | 115.4 | 775.2 | 539.3 | 1,314.5 |
| 16 | DR. RAJENDRA PRASAD GOVERNMENT MEDICAL COLLEGE, KANGRA | 154.7 | 137.8 | 152.9 | 115.4 | 91.6 | 652.4 | 457.4 | 1,109.8 |
| 17 | SHRI RAM MURTI SMARAK INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, BAREILLY | 146.0 | 174.7 | 184.1 | 120.3 | 93.6 | 718.7 | 389.4 | 1,108.1 |
| 18 | SHRI GURU RAM RAI INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL & HEALTH SCIENCES, DEHRADUN | 111.1 | 111.6 | 141.1 | 115.0 | 74.7 | 553.5 | 117.6 | 671.1 |

## ENGINEERING

RANKS & SCORES OF COLLEGES

| NORTH ZONE RANK 2021 | COLLEGE & CITY | G= GOVT./ P=PVT. | INTAKE QUALITY & GOVERNANCE | ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE | INFRASTRUCTURE & LIVING EXPERIENCE | PERSONALITY & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT | CAREER PROGRESSION & PLACEMENT | OBJECTIVE SCORE | PERCEPTUAL SCORE | OVERALL SCORE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 288 | 264 | 240 | 120 | 288 | 1,200 | 800 | 2,000 |
| 1 | INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, NEW DELHI | G | 244.5 | 230.1 | 216 | 100.3 | 273.4 | 1,064.3 | 799.2 | 1,863.5 |
| 2 | INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, KANPUR | G | 235.1 | 221 | 215.2 | 98.9 | 258.1 | 1,028.3 | 791.9 | 1,820.2 |
| 3 | INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, ROORKEE | G | 234.7 | 213.2 | 205 | 97.5 | 254.8 | 1,005.2 | 787.1 | 1,792.3 |
| 4 | BIRLA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE (BITS), PILANI | P | 221.6 | 173.5 | 180.5 | 88.8 | 250.3 | 914.7 | 777.9 | 1,692.6 |
| 5 | DELHI TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY, NEW DELHI | G | 226.8 | 175.6 | 179.6 | 86.8 | 229.1 | 897.9 | 774.2 | 1,672.1 |
| 6 | NETAJI SUBHAS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, NEW DELHI | G | 227.6 | 155.5 | 185.8 | 78.6 | 250.1 | 897.6 | 772.9 | 1,670.5 |
| 7 | INDIAN INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, PRAYAGRAJ, UTTAR PRADESH | G | 209.9 | 173.2 | 208.5 | 82.6 | 213.1 | 887.3 | 752.5 | 1,639.8 |
| 8 | INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, MANDI, HIMACHAL PRADESH | G | 206.0 | 180.7 | 191.8 | 86.8 | 247.3 | 912.6 | 704.4 | 1,617 |
| 9 | INDRAPRASTHA INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY DELHI, NEW DELHI | G | 207.8 | 169.8 | 180.8 | 91.5 | 222.5 | 872.4 | 743.6 | 1,616 |
| 10 | MALAVIYA NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, JAIPUR | G | 208.4 | 195.3 | 178.7 | 88.6 | 191.9 | 862.9 | 713 | 1,575.9 |
| 11 | NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, HAMIRPUR, HIMACHAL PRADESH | G | 208.3 | 177.7 | 179.7 | 83.7 | 173.7 | 823.1 | 711.1 | 1,534.2 |
| 12 | THAPAR INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY, PATIALA, PUNJAB | P | 207.1 | 153.3 | 178.7 | 85.6 | 178.9 | 803.6 | 714.9 | 1,518.5 |
| 13 | INDIRA GANDHI DELHI TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY FOR WOMEN, NEW DELHI | G | 204.2 | 158 | 171.5 | 84.4 | 195 | 813.1 | 700.5 | 1,513.6 |
| 14 | HARCOURT BUTLER TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY, KANPUR, UTTAR PRADESH | G | 210.1 | 161.9 | 170.4 | 74 | 188.9 | 805.3 | 695.6 | 1,500.9 |

# BEST COLLEGES OF NORTH INDIA

## ENGINEERING

RANKS & SCORES OF COLLEGES

| NORTH ZONE RANK 2021 | COLLEGE & CITY | G= GOVT./ P=PVT. | INTAKE QUALITY & GOVERNANCE | ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE | INFRASTRUCTURE & LIVING EXPERIENCE | PERSONALITY & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT | CAREER PROGRESSION & PLACEMENT | OBJECTIVE SCORE | PERCEPTUAL SCORE | OVERALL SCORE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 288 | 264 | 240 | 120 | 288 | 1,200 | 800 | 2,000 |
| 15 | DR. B.R. AMBEDKAR NATIONAL INST. OF TECHNOLOGY, JALANDHAR, PUNJAB | G | 220.3 | 154.2 | 178.9 | 90.4 | 188.2 | 832.0 | 610.4 | 1,442.4 |
| 16 | ZAKIR HUSAIN COLLEGE OF ENGG & TECH, ALIGARH, UTTAR PRADESH | G | 210.5 | 172.7 | 176.5 | 80.3 | 164.9 | 804.9 | 624.1 | 1,429 |
| 17 | NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, SRINAGAR, JAMMU & KASHMIR | G | 191.7 | 151.7 | 158.9 | 81.5 | 189.7 | 773.5 | 532.1 | 1,305.6 |
| 18 | MAHARAJA SURAJMAL INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, NEW DELHI | P | 199.5 | 121 | 150.6 | 65.5 | 169.6 | 706.2 | 481.8 | 1,188 |
| 19 | GALGOTIAS COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY, GREATER NOIDA | P | 188.5 | 113 | 150.5 | 64.5 | 123 | 639.5 | 544.3 | 1,183.8 |
| 20 | AMITY SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY, NOIDA | P | 140.6 | 166 | 160.1 | 67.3 | 147.3 | 681.3 | 471.7 | 1,153 |
| 21 | FACULTY OF ENGINEERING, MANIPAL UNIVERSITY, JAIPUR | P | 163.4 | 115.4 | 170.7 | 85.8 | 180.6 | 715.9 | 394.9 | 1,110.8 |
| 22 | G.L. BAJAJ INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT, GREATER NOIDA | P | 132.8 | 150.2 | 157.1 | 75.3 | 146.3 | 661.7 | 437 | 1,098.7 |
| 23 | THE LNM INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, JAIPUR | P | 164.3 | 148 | 144.5 | 70.3 | 164.1 | 691.2 | 313.1 | 1,004.3 |
| 24 | JAYPEE INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, NOIDA | P | 176.9 | 109.5 | 132.8 | 28.3 | 184.4 | 631.9 | 372.2 | 1,004.1 |
| 25 | SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING, UNIVERSITY OF PETROLEUM AND ENERGY STUDIES, DEHRADUN, UTTARAKHAND | P | 163.8 | 144.9 | 156.8 | 66.3 | 161.4 | 693.2 | 306 | 999.2 |
| 26 | GURU NANAK DEV ENGINEERING COLLEGE, LUDHIANA, PUNJAB | P | 190.8 | 122.1 | 160.5 | 63.8 | 113.5 | 650.7 | 336.2 | 986.9 |
| 27 | UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING, CHANDIGARH UNIVERSITY, MOHALI | P | 112.2 | 151.2 | 173.2 | 67 | 142 | 645.6 | 306.3 | 951.9 |
| 28 | INST. OF ENGINEERING & TECH, CHITKARA UNIVERSITY, RAJPURA, PUNJAB | P | 120.6 | 149.9 | 157.4 | 51.4 | 159.3 | 638.6 | 293.1 | 931.7 |
| 29 | AJAY KUMAR GARG ENGINEERING COLLEGE, GHAZIABAD | P | 168.4 | 116.8 | 142.5 | 68.3 | 120.8 | 616.8 | 260.9 | 877.7 |
| 30 | FACULTY OF ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY, MANAV RACHNA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, FARIDABAD | P | 176.3 | 144.5 | 174.4 | 72 | 95.4 | 662.6 | 194.5 | 857.1 |
| 31 | SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY, GALGOTIAS UNIVERSITY, GREATER NOIDA | P | 177.2 | 92.3 | 113.4 | 42.2 | 97.1 | 522.2 | 332.3 | 854.5 |
| 32 | DAV INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY, JALANDHAR, PUNJAB | P | 185.8 | 84 | 172.8 | 70 | 120.3 | 632.9 | 209.5 | 842.4 |
| 33 | JAIPUR ENGINEERING COLLEGE AND RESEARCH CENTRE, JAIPUR | P | 170.2 | 83.3 | 108.4 | 68.2 | 157 | 587.1 | 253.9 | 841 |
| 34 | INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING & MANAGEMENT, JAIPUR | P | 99.9 | 95.6 | 170.2 | 78.9 | 119.1 | 563.7 | 270.6 | 834.3 |
| 35 | SHRI RAMSWAROOP MEMORIAL COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND MANAGEMENT, LUCKNOW | P | 123.9 | 86.1 | 139.3 | 45.1 | 84.4 | 478.8 | 353.1 | 831.9 |
| 36 | INSTITUTE OF ENGG AND TECH, J.K. LAKSHMIPAT UNIVERSITY, JAIPUR | P | 101.1 | 128 | 179.9 | 68.9 | 91.4 | 569.3 | 262.5 | 831.8 |
| 37 | PRANVEER SINGH INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, KANPUR, UTTAR PRADESH | P | 177 | 72.8 | 142 | 52.1 | 130 | 573.9 | 253.9 | 827.8 |
| 38 | SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, SANSKRITI UNIVERSITY, MATHURA, UTTAR PRADESH | P | 101.1 | 125.1 | 165.6 | 68.8 | 123.2 | 583.8 | 243.6 | 827.4 |
| 39 | CHANDIGARH ENGINEERING COLLEGE, MOHALI | P | 134.7 | 113.7 | 138.6 | 64.8 | 152.4 | 604.2 | 209.1 | 813.3 |
| 40 | AMITY SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY, LUCKNOW, | P | 152.1 | 132.0 | 165.5 | 56.5 | 137.9 | 644 | 131.9 | 775.9 |
| 41 | UNITED COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING & RESEARCH, PRAYAGRAJ, UTTAR PRADESH | P | 127.1 | 115.5 | 122.9 | 49.5 | 136.6 | 551.6 | 145.3 | 696.9 |
| 42 | AMITY INSTITUTE OF BIOTECHNOLOGY, LUCKNOW | P | 127.8 | 143.5 | 163.5 | 30 | 137.1 | 601.9 | 88.5 | 690.4 |
| 43 | INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY, GLA UNIVERSITY, MATHURA, UTTAR PRADESH | P | 103.6 | 117.5 | 167.6 | 55.5 | 139.9 | 584.1 | 101.8 | 685.9 |
| 44 | KIET GROUP OF INSTITUTIONS, GHAZIABAD | P | 133.8 | 99.4 | 136.6 | 56.7 | 119.8 | 546.3 | 135.9 | 682.2 |
| 45 | SCHOOL OF ENGG AND TECH, SHARDA UNIVERSITY, GREATER NOIDA | P | 162.6 | 142.3 | 135.6 | 77.9 | 55.6 | 574 | 106.1 | 680.1 |
| 46 | SHRI RAM MURTI SMARAK COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY, BAREILLY, UTTAR PRADESH | P | 103.3 | 120.6 | 160.8 | 57.3 | 122.7 | 564.7 | 112 | 676.7 |
| 47 | AXIS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY & MANAGEMENT, KANPUR, UTTAR PRADESH | P | 129.3 | 108.2 | 144.5 | 51.7 | 113.9 | 547.6 | 123.3 | 670.9 |
| 48 | JIMS ENGINEERING MANAGEMENT TECHNICAL CAMPUS, GREATER NOIDA | P | 168 | 121.4 | 151.8 | 31 | 90.3 | 562.5 | 95.7 | 658.2 |
| 49 | FACULTY OF ENGINEERING, TEERTHANKER MAHAVEER UNIVERSITY, MORADABAD, UTTAR PRADESH | P | 156.8 | 122.7 | 156.1 | 66.6 | 47.2 | 549.4 | 105.5 | 654.9 |
| 50 | GEETANJALI INSTITUTE OF TECHNICAL STUDIES, UDAIPUR, RAJASTHAN | P | 126.3 | 121.6 | 164.4 | 49.9 | 93.3 | 555.5 | 75.0 | 630.5 |

# BEST COLLEGES OF NORTH INDIA

## ENGINEERING

RANKS & SCORES OF COLLEGES

| NORTH ZONE RANK 2021 | COLLEGE & CITY | G= GOVT./ P=PVT. | INTAKE QUALITY & GOVERNANCE | ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE | INFRASTRUCTURE & LIVING EXPERIENCE | PERSONALITY & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT | CAREER PROGRESSION & PLACEMENT | OBJECTIVE SCORE | PERCEPTUAL SCORE | OVERALL SCORE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 288 | 264 | 240 | 120 | 288 | 1,200 | 800 | 2,000 |
| 51 | SHOBHIT INST OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY, MEERUT, UTTAR PRADESH | P | 126.1 | 121.1 | 143.9 | 55.1 | 109.7 | 555.9 | 73.3 | 629.2 |
| 52 | SUBHARTI INST OF TECHNOLOGY AND ENGINEERING, MEERUT, UTTAR PRADESH | P | 116.3 | 152.1 | 173.9 | 15.3 | 36.1 | 493.7 | 129.4 | 623.1 |
| 53 | ROORKEE COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING, ROORKEE, UTTARAKHAND | P | 106.3 | 135.5 | 156.3 | 52.1 | 133.7 | 583.9 | 35.8 | 619.7 |
| 54 | MAHARISHI MARKANDESHWAR ENGG COLLEGE, MULLANA-AMBALA, HARYANA | P | 107.9 | 139.5 | 158.9 | 48.2 | 82.2 | 536.7 | 62.4 | 599.1 |
| 55 | KANPUR INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, KANPUR, UTTAR PRADESH | P | 128.4 | 66.3 | 164.9 | 78.2 | 71.5 | 509.3 | 82.8 | 592.1 |
| 56 | SETH JAI PARKASH MUKAND LAL INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY, YAMUNANAGAR, HARYANA | P | 138.4 | 70.4 | 140.2 | 49.5 | 120.6 | 519.1 | 68.4 | 587.5 |
| 57 | ITS ENGINEERING COLLEGE, GREATER NOIDA | P | 116.2 | 131.8 | 158 | 68.6 | 79.9 | 554.5 | 22.7 | 577.2 |
| 58 | SHIVALIK COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING, DEHRADUN, UTTARAKHAND | P | 107.3 | 102.3 | 167.3 | 69 | 94.5 | 540.4 | 22.7 | 563.1 |
| 59 | POORNIMA UNIVERSITY, JAIPUR | P | 99.5 | 125.7 | 149.5 | 59.9 | 79.9 | 514.5 | 23.5 | 538 |
| 60 | RAJSHREE INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT AND TECHNOLOGY, BAREILLY, UTTAR PRADESH | P | 97.1 | 142.5 | 158.2 | 14.5 | 55.4 | 467.7 | 0 | 467.7 |

## ARCHITECTURE

RANKS & SCORES OF COLLEGES

| NORTH ZONE RANK 2021 | COLLEGE & CITY | INTAKE QUALITY & GOVERNANCE | ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE | INFRASTRUCTURE & LIVING EXPERIENCE | PERSONALITY & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT | CAREER PROGRESSION & PLACEMENT | OBJECTIVE SCORE | PERCEPTUAL SCORE | OVERALL SCORE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 275 | 260 | 240 | 150 | 275 | 1,200 | 800 | 2,000 |
| 1 | DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING, INDIAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, ROORKEE | 231.6 | 221.6 | 219.0 | 144.9 | 224.7 | 1,041.8 | 800.0 | 1,841.8 |
| 2 | SCHOOL OF PLANNING AND ARCHITECTURE, NEW DELHI | 237 | 209.7 | 212.2 | 136.7 | 221 | 1,016.6 | 789.1 | 1,805.7 |
| 3 | FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE AND EKISTICS, JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA, NEW DELHI | 220.7 | 175 | 167.4 | 102.0 | 215.8 | 880.9 | 709 | 1,589.9 |
| 4 | DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE, ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY, ALIGARH, UTTAR PRADESH | 211.4 | 149.6 | 173.5 | 52.5 | 190.5 | 777.5 | 585.9 | 1,363.4 |
| 5 | DEPARTMENT OF ARCHITECTURE, NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF TECH, HAMIRPUR, HIMACHAL PRADESH | 187.3 | 147.7 | 186.8 | 104.4 | 144.1 | 770.3 | 564.2 | 1,334.5 |
| 6 | SUSHANT SCHOOL OF ART AND ARCHITECTURE, GURUGRAM | 179.3 | 168.7 | 157.4 | 103.7 | 159.8 | 768.9 | 531.6 | 1,300.5 |
| 7 | AMITY SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING, NOIDA | 188.2 | 166.7 | 170.8 | 98.3 | 164.9 | 788.9 | 510.7 | 1,299.6 |
| 8 | FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING, DR. A.P.J. ABDUL KALAM TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY, LUCKNOW, UTTAR PRADESH | 207.6 | 148 | 154 | 85.5 | 135.6 | 730.7 | 435.2 | 1,165.9 |
| 9 | MBS SCHOOL OF PLANNING AND ARCHITECTURE, NEW DELHI | 146.1 | 125.3 | 133.2 | 65.8 | 162.4 | 632.8 | 424.4 | 1,057.2 |
| 10 | AMITY SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING, LUCKNOW | 159.9 | 152.2 | 200 | 103.8 | 146.4 | 762.3 | 291.7 | 1,054 |
| 11 | AXIS INSTITUTE OF ARCHITECTURE, KANPUR, UTTAR PRADESH | 158.4 | 126.3 | 185.1 | 101 | 163 | 733.8 | 260.7 | 994.5 |
| 12 | CHITKARA SCHOOL OF PLANNING AND ARCHITECTURE, PATIALA, PUNJAB | 161.2 | 171.3 | 146.2 | 104.2 | 161.6 | 744.5 | 223.2 | 967.7 |
| 13 | SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE, NOIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, GREATER NOIDA | 145.9 | 185.4 | 194.7 | 101.5 | 84.9 | 712.4 | 211.2 | 923.6 |
| 14 | FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING, INTEGRAL UNIVERSITY, LUCKNOW | 173 | 153.5 | 180.9 | 102.4 | 147.1 | 756.9 | 154.6 | 911.5 |
| 15 | AAYOJAN SCHOOLS OF ARCHITECTURE, JAIPUR | 133.9 | 102.1 | 124.3 | 87.3 | 136.8 | 584.4 | 284.5 | 868.9 |
| 16 | SCHOOL OF PLANNING & ARCHITECTURE, POORNIMA UNIVERSITY, JAIPUR | 151.4 | 140.2 | 177.1 | 100.9 | 139.1 | 708.7 | 82.3 | 791 |
| 17 | SUNDER DEEP COLLEGE OF ARCHITECTURE, GHAZIABAD | 161.8 | 126.2 | 155.8 | 84.5 | 163 | 691.3 | 0 | 691.3 |

# BEST COLLEGES OF NORTH INDIA

## LAW

RANKS & SCORES OF COLLEGES

| NORTH ZONE RANK 2021 | COLLEGE & CITY | INTAKE QUALITY & GOVERNANCE | ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE | INFRASTRUCTURE & LIVING EXPERIENCE | PERSONALITY & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT | CAREER PROGRESSION & PLACEMENT | OBJECTIVE SCORE | PERCEPTUAL SCORE | OVERALL SCORE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 210 | 300 | 180 | 240 | 270 | 1,200 | 800 | 2,000 |
| 1 | DR. RAM MANOHAR LOHIYA NATIONAL LAW UNIVERSITY, LUCKNOW | 169.8 | 236.3 | 162.3 | 201.7 | 180.9 | 951.0 | 700.6 | 1,651.6 |
| 2 | FACULTY OF LAW, BANARAS HINDU UNIVERSITY, VARANASI | 164.4 | 232.8 | 147.9 | 172.5 | 185.8 | 903.4 | 737.7 | 1,641.1 |
| 3 | FACULTY OF LAW, UNIVERSITY OF LUCKNOW, LUCKNOW | 153.6 | 231.3 | 147.7 | 169.6 | 200.4 | 902.6 | 636.7 | 1,539.3 |
| 4 | FACULTY OF LAW, ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY, ALIGARH | 147.9 | 252.1 | 155.3 | 167.1 | 168.3 | 890.7 | 613.4 | 1,504.1 |
| 5 | ARMY INSTITUTE OF LAW, MOHALI | 130.9 | 220.3 | 143.1 | 159.7 | 171.5 | 825.5 | 520.4 | 1,345.9 |
| 6 | FACULTY OF LAW, JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA, NEW DELHI | 145.9 | 231.3 | 151.4 | 132.3 | 139.9 | 800.8 | 521.4 | 1,322.2 |
| 7 | LLOYD LAW COLLEGE, GREATER NOIDA | 131.7 | 224.1 | 130.0 | 172.6 | 172.7 | 831.1 | 489.6 | 1,320.7 |
| 8 | SCHOOL OF LAW, UNIVERSITY OF PETROLEUM AND ENERGY STUDIES, DEHRADUN | 138.1 | 182.6 | 139.2 | 170.6 | 156.9 | 787.4 | 510.1 | 1,297.5 |
| 9 | AMITY LAW SCHOOL, NOIDA | 104.6 | 223.8 | 144.0 | 167.1 | 148.3 | 787.8 | 437.1 | 1,224.9 |
| 10 | SCHOOL OF LAW, IMS UNISON UNIVERSITY, DEHRADUN | 113.1 | 224.2 | 141.7 | 156.3 | 159.3 | 794.6 | 289.2 | 1,083.8 |
| 11 | ICFAI LAW SCHOOL, DEHRADUN | 124.2 | 174.7 | 129.9 | 132.3 | 147.8 | 708.9 | 360.2 | 1,069.1 |
| 12 | IMS LAW COLLEGE, NOIDA | 112.2 | 197.3 | 125.7 | 147.1 | 161.0 | 743.3 | 322.4 | 1,065.7 |
| 13 | SCHOOL OF LAW, SHARDA UNIVERSITY, GREATER NOIDA | 128.1 | 222.8 | 150.2 | 153.8 | 149.8 | 804.7 | 222.6 | 1,027.3 |
| 14 | SCHOOL OF LAW, GALGOTIAS UNIVERSITY, GREATER NOIDA | 129.6 | 189.6 | 144.9 | 145.0 | 143.0 | 752.1 | 264.7 | 1,016.8 |
| 15 | LAW COLLEGE DEHRADUN, UTTARANCHAL UNIVERSITY, DEHRADUN | 125.6 | 220.5 | 129.5 | 145.8 | 171.8 | 793.2 | 211.3 | 1,004.5 |
| 16 | AMITY LAW SCHOOL, GURUGRAM | 118.5 | 220.3 | 154.8 | 159.7 | 154.4 | 807.7 | 196.3 | 1004.0 |
| 17 | VIVEKANANDA SCHOOL OF LAW AND LEGAL STUDIES, VIVEKANANDA INSTITUTE OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES (VIPS), NEW DELHI | 134.7 | 159.6 | 116.8 | 167.4 | 155.0 | 733.5 | 269.3 | 1,002.8 |
| 18 | AMITY LAW SCHOOL, LUCKNOW | 118.1 | 191.2 | 145.1 | 135.5 | 165.6 | 755.5 | 245.7 | 1,001.2 |
| 19 | ST. WILFRED'S COLLEGE OF LAW, JAIPUR | 115.0 | 183.2 | 140.9 | 145.6 | 150.5 | 735.2 | 151.1 | 886.3 |
| 20 | DEPARTMENT OF LAW, MAHARISHI MARKANDESHWAR UNIVERSITY, AMBALA | 82.0 | 171.2 | 145.4 | 92.6 | 152.4 | 643.6 | 212.9 | 856.5 |
| 21 | CHANDERPRABHU JAIN COLLEGE OF HIGHER STUDIES & SCHOOL OF LAW, NEW DELHI | 136.1 | 174.0 | 128.7 | 155.9 | 137.5 | 732.2 | 98.6 | 830.8 |
| 22 | SEEDLING SCHOOL OF LAW & GOVERNANCE, JAIPUR | 121.8 | 212.3 | 149.4 | 143.5 | 45.2 | 672.2 | 135.9 | 808.1 |
| 23 | ST. SOLDIER LAW COLLEGE, JALANDHAR | 116.6 | 115.2 | 116.3 | 146.9 | 162.4 | 657.4 | 117.5 | 774.9 |
| 24 | INSTITUTE OF LEGAL STUDIES & RESEARCH, MANGALAYATAN UNIVERSITY, ALIGARH | 108.1 | 130.2 | 140.1 | 83.1 | 140.0 | 601.5 | 145.5 | 747.0 |
| 25 | GEETA INSTITUTE OF LAW, PANIPAT | 93.7 | 170.5 | 130.6 | 136.6 | 121.3 | 652.7 | 50.4 | 703.1 |
| 26 | SHRI GIRRAJ MAHARAJ COLLEGE OF LAW AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES, MATHURA | 102.4 | 94.2 | 105.9 | 98.8 | 72.1 | 473.4 | 0.0 | 473.4 |

## BBA

RANKS & SCORES OF COLLEGES

| NORTH ZONE RANK 2021 | COLLEGE & CITY | INTAKE QUALITY & GOVERNANCE | ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE | INFRASTRUCTURE & LIVING EXPERIENCE | PERSONALITY & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT | CAREER PROGRESSION & PLACEMENT | OBJECTIVE SCORE | PERCEPTUAL SCORE | OVERALL SCORE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 240 | 270 | 180 | 210 | 300 | 1,200 | 800 | 2,000 |
| 1 | SHAHEED SUKHDEV COLLEGE OF BUSINESS STUDIES, NEW DELHI | 209.5 | 227.0 | 139.5 | 164.4 | 291.8 | 1,032.2 | 796.9 | 1,829.1 |
| 2 | AMITY SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, NOIDA | 157.0 | 215.4 | 142.6 | 151.7 | 233.8 | 900.5 | 759.5 | 1,660.0 |
| 3 | MAHARAJA SURAJMAL INSTITUTE, NEW DELHI | 175.6 | 191.4 | 121.9 | 121.3 | 222.9 | 833.1 | 661.1 | 1,494.2 |
| 4 | KESHAV MAHAVIDYALAYA, NEW DELHI | 182.9 | 121.0 | 109.4 | 127.6 | 227.4 | 768.3 | 719.1 | 1,487.4 |
| 5 | JAGAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES, NEW DELHI | 157.4 | 222.2 | 93.5 | 168.1 | 233.3 | 874.5 | 535.4 | 1,409.9 |
| 6 | GOSWAMI GANESH DUTTA SD COLLEGE, CHANDIGARH | 178.3 | 167.0 | 136.3 | 166.6 | 208.4 | 856.6 | 544.8 | 1,401.4 |
| 7 | JAGANNATH INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT SCHOOL, VASANT KUNJ, NEW DELHI | 152.4 | 152.1 | 77.1 | 149.9 | 214.1 | 745.6 | 632.2 | 1,377.8 |

# BEST COLLEGES OF NORTH INDIA

## BBA

RANKS & SCORES OF COLLEGES

| NORTH ZONE RANK 2021 | COLLEGE & CITY | INTAKE QUALITY & GOVERNANCE | ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE | INFRASTRUCTURE & LIVING EXPERIENCE | PERSONALITY & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT | CAREER PROGRESSION & PLACEMENT | OBJECTIVE SCORE | PERCEPTUAL SCORE | OVERALL SCORE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 240 | 270 | 180 | 210 | 300 | 1,200 | 800 | 2,000 |
| 8 | SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, UNIVERSITY OF PETROLEUM AND ENERGY STUDIES, DEHRADUN | 154.9 | 203.1 | 121.9 | 125.9 | 225.6 | 831.4 | 539.2 | 1,370.6 |
| 9 | JAGANNATH INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT SCHOOL, KALKAJI, NEW DELHI | 143.1 | 182.9 | 92.0 | 188.0 | 218.8 | 824.8 | 543.3 | 1,368.1 |
| 10 | INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES, NOIDA | 143.8 | 175.9 | 95.6 | 126.8 | 194.3 | 736.4 | 580.3 | 1,316.7 |
| 11 | SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, IMS UNISON UNIVERSITY, DEHRADUN | 117.9 | 123.2 | 115.9 | 124.8 | 206.5 | 688.3 | 594.4 | 1,282.7 |
| 12 | DOON BUSINESS SCHOOL, DEHRADUN | 133.6 | 168.9 | 129.4 | 174.7 | 179.0 | 785.6 | 492.2 | 1,277.8 |
| 13 | SS JAIN SUBODH PG (AUTONOMOUS) COLLEGE, JAIPUR | 171.0 | 157.7 | 96.9 | 104.5 | 208.8 | 738.9 | 497.7 | 1,236.6 |
| 14 | I.T.S. UG INSTITUTE, MOHAN NAGAR, GHAZIABAD | 158.4 | 185.7 | 119.3 | 162.9 | 201.2 | 827.5 | 407.9 | 1,235.4 |
| 15 | VIVEKANANDA INSTITUTE OF PROFESSIONAL STUDIES, NEW DELHI | 172.2 | 140.0 | 59.1 | 119.2 | 184.2 | 674.7 | 530.4 | 1,205.1 |
| 16 | AMITY BUSINESS SCHOOL, GURUGRAM | 118.5 | 204.1 | 125.7 | 143.9 | 168.7 | 760.9 | 441.8 | 1,202.7 |
| 17 | APEEJAY COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS, JALANDHAR | 167.9 | 153.8 | 69.2 | 129.8 | 173.2 | 693.9 | 478.3 | 1,172.2 |
| 18 | DAV COLLEGE, SEC-10, CHANDIGARH | 166.3 | 99.7 | 115.4 | 118.1 | 185.7 | 685.2 | 485.4 | 1,170.6 |
| 19 | KANYA MAHA VIDYALAYA JALANDHAR (AUTONOMOUS), JALANDHAR | 197.3 | 141.7 | 116.3 | 127.3 | 205.2 | 787.8 | 382.5 | 1,170.3 |
| 20 | CHANDIGARH BUSINESS SCHOOL OF ADMINISTRATION, MOHALI | 135.5 | 178.7 | 132.0 | 95.7 | 214.2 | 756.1 | 365.9 | 1,122.0 |
| 21 | UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, CHANDIGARH UNIVERSITY, MOHALI | 140.4 | 176.0 | 127.6 | 130.1 | 216.0 | 790.1 | 290.0 | 1,080.1 |
| 22 | LINGAYA'S LALITA DEVI INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT & SCIENCES, NEW DELHI | 152.4 | 161.8 | 107.9 | 126.8 | 197.7 | 746.6 | 332.8 | 1,079.4 |
| 23 | DAV CENTENARY COLLEGE, FARIDABAD | 169.5 | 116.9 | 94.2 | 111.7 | 150.9 | 643.2 | 423.3 | 1,066.5 |
| 24 | CHITKARA BUSINESS SCHOOL, RAJPURA | 126.1 | 185.6 | 140.4 | 169.6 | 142.7 | 764.4 | 299.7 | 1,064.1 |
| 25 | FACULTY OF BUSINESS MANAGEMENT, PCTE LUDHIANA, LUDHIANA | 115.9 | 151.9 | 120.8 | 152.0 | 192.2 | 732.8 | 278.4 | 1,011.2 |
| 26 | FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES, ICFAI BUSINESS SCHOOL, JAIPUR | 103.4 | 165.3 | 148.6 | 187.9 | 194.2 | 799.4 | 185.0 | 984.4 |
| 27 | BBK DAV COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, AMRITSAR | 177.6 | 105.5 | 96.6 | 105.1 | 159.4 | 644.2 | 339.4 | 983.6 |
| 28 | INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT, JK LAKSHMIPAT UNIVERSITY, JAIPUR | 124.6 | 161.3 | 156.5 | 127.5 | 151.6 | 721.5 | 255.4 | 976.9 |
| 29 | SCHOOL OF BUSINESS & MANAGEMENT, JAIPUR NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, JAIPUR | 148.5 | 148.8 | 126.3 | 150.0 | 185.3 | 758.9 | 217.9 | 976.8 |
| 30 | SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, GALGOTIAS UNIVERSITY, GREATER NOIDA | 103.8 | 122.0 | 100.7 | 93.8 | 187.7 | 608.0 | 353.8 | 961.8 |
| 31 | TECNIA INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDIES, NEW DELHI | 136.5 | 141.9 | 86.2 | 96.1 | 149.5 | 610.2 | 348.5 | 958.7 |
| 32 | ST. WILFRED'S PG COLLEGE, JAIPUR | 127.4 | 139.4 | 121.5 | 125.5 | 200.8 | 714.6 | 219.5 | 934.1 |
| 33 | PODDAR INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE, JAIPUR | 145.0 | 114.3 | 116.5 | 178.2 | 200.7 | 754.7 | 157.5 | 912.2 |
| 34 | AXIS INSTITUTE OF HIGHER EDUCATION, KANPUR | 125.1 | 126.2 | 118.8 | 122.9 | 188.3 | 681.3 | 230.5 | 911.8 |
| 35 | JIMS ENGINEERING MANAGEMENT TECHNICAL CAMPUS, GREATER NOIDA | 106.8 | 94.9 | 80.2 | 85.8 | 203.2 | 570.9 | 333.2 | 904.1 |
| 36 | UTTARANCHAL INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT, DEHRADUN | 109.6 | 119.2 | 117.1 | 101.7 | 188.4 | 636.0 | 262.0 | 898.0 |
| 37 | DAV COLLEGE, ABOHAR, PUNJAB | 168.7 | 153.6 | 126.2 | 120.8 | 113.0 | 682.3 | 215.3 | 897.6 |
| 38 | GIAN JYOTI INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT & TECHNOLOGY, MOHALI | 133.0 | 171.4 | 116.4 | 144.4 | 179.0 | 744.2 | 140.3 | 884.5 |
| 39 | SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT & COMMERCE, SANSKRITI UNIVERSITY, MATHURA | 122.6 | 175.9 | 137.0 | 139.6 | 196.6 | 771.7 | 106.2 | 877.9 |
| 40 | DEVKI DEVI JAIN MEMORIAL COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, LUDHIANA | 163.4 | 76.1 | 93.9 | 115.9 | 125.9 | 575.2 | 299.3 | 874.5 |
| 41 | PSIT COLLEGE OF HIGHER EDUCATION, KANPUR | 98.4 | 115.6 | 122.0 | 92.7 | 195.6 | 624.3 | 221.6 | 845.9 |
| 42 | GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, TULA'S INSTITUTE, DEHRADUN | 83.4 | 101.7 | 116.0 | 127.6 | 178.4 | 607.1 | 221.1 | 828.2 |
| 43 | DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT, IIS (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), JAIPUR | 142.4 | 151.1 | 131.5 | 129.2 | 145.1 | 699.3 | 127.4 | 826.7 |
| 44 | ACHARYA VISHNU GUPT SUBHARTI COLLEGE OF MANAGEMENT & COMMERCE, MEERUT | 158.4 | 132.5 | 140.4 | 69.3 | 113.1 | 613.7 | 137.6 | 751.3 |
| 45 | FACULTY OF COMMERCE & BUSINESS MANAGEMENT, AMRAPALI GROUP OF INSTITUTIONS, HALDWANI | 105.2 | 88.5 | 111.1 | 77.4 | 143.6 | 525.8 | 123.7 | 649.5 |
| 46 | INSTITUTE OF APPLIED MEDICINES & RESEARCH, GHAZIABAD | 98.8 | 117.5 | 80.1 | 100.7 | 135.0 | 532.1 | 65.5 | 597.6 |
| 47 | VIVEK COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, BIJNOR, UTTAR PRADESH | 142.2 | 133.9 | 85.4 | 81.8 | 126.5 | 569.8 | 22.4 | 592.2 |
| 48 | RAMA PG COLLEGE, LUCKNOW | 108.9 | 36.8 | 89.6 | 113.0 | 123.9 | 472.2 | 108.9 | 581.1 |
| 49 | PT. DEEN DAYAL UPADHYAY MANAGEMENT COLLEGE, MEERUT | 89.5 | 72.1 | 33.3 | 42.2 | 192.5 | 429.6 | 0.0 | 429.6 |

# BEST COLLEGES OF NORTH INDIA

## BCA

RANKS & SCORES OF COLLEGES

| NORTH ZONE RANK 2021 | COLLEGE & CITY | INTAKE QUALITY & GOVERNANCE | ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE | INFRASTRUCTURE & LIVING EXPERIENCE | PERSONALITY & LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT | CAREER PROGRESSION & PLACEMENT | OBJECTIVE SCORE | PERCEPTUAL SCORE | OVERALL SCORE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | 210 | 270 | 240 | 180 | 300 | 1,200 | 800 | 2,000 |
| 1 | AMITY INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, NOIDA | 133.2 | 217.0 | 198.5 | 140.0 | 227.6 | 916.3 | 756.6 | 1,672.9 |
| 2 | MAHARAJA SURAJMAL INSTITUTE, NEW DELHI | 153.0 | 200.3 | 178.5 | 160.4 | 203.1 | 895.3 | 697.8 | 1,593.1 |
| 3 | AIM & ACT, DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER SCIENCE, BANASTHALI VIDYAPITH, BANASTHALI VIDYAPITH | 142.6 | 195.1 | 174.2 | 124.3 | 193.8 | 830.0 | 702.8 | 1,532.8 |
| 4 | JAGAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES, ROHINI, NEW DELHI | 142.0 | 203.9 | 134.0 | 148.5 | 224.2 | 852.6 | 600.3 | 1,452.9 |
| 5 | GOSWAMI GANESH DUTTA SANATAN DHARAM COLLEGE, CHANDIGARH | 157.9 | 175.9 | 186.6 | 142.3 | 209.3 | 872.0 | 573.3 | 1,445.3 |
| 6 | SCHOOL OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, IMS NOIDA, NOIDA | 145.3 | 187.9 | 116.5 | 136.1 | 207.4 | 793.2 | 637.6 | 1,430.8 |
| 7 | DAV COLLEGE, SEC-10, CHANDIGARH | 158.6 | 163.3 | 172.0 | 101.8 | 211.4 | 807.1 | 618.5 | 1,425.6 |
| 8 | JAGANNATH INTERNATIONAL MANAGEMENT SCHOOL, VASANT KUNJ, NEW DELHI | 141.7 | 178.2 | 139.6 | 122.0 | 207.2 | 788.7 | 608.1 | 1,396.8 |
| 9 | INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY AND SCIENCE (ITS) UG CAMPUS, MOHAN NAGAR, GHAZIABAD | 137.4 | 180.7 | 170.8 | 121.9 | 207.9 | 818.7 | 574.8 | 1,393.5 |
| 10 | KANYA MAHA VIDYALAYA, JALANDHAR | 177.4 | 170.2 | 161.1 | 102.9 | 218.6 | 830.2 | 551.8 | 1,382.0 |
| 11 | AMITY INSTITUTE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, LUCKNOW | 134.3 | 214.0 | 195.0 | 117.6 | 222.1 | 883.0 | 481.3 | 1,364.3 |
| 12 | S.S. JAIN SUBODH P.G. (AUTONOMOUS) COLLEGE, JAIPUR | 163.9 | 185.5 | 163.4 | 120.9 | 216.3 | 850.0 | 511.3 | 1,361.3 |
| 13 | MEHR CHAND MAHAJAN DAV COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, CHANDIGARH | 139.6 | 201.4 | 171.1 | 130.2 | 214.4 | 856.7 | 488.8 | 1,345.5 |
| 14 | DAV COLLEGE, HOSHIARPUR, PUNJAB | 158.1 | 204.6 | 189.7 | 133.8 | 202.0 | 888.2 | 435.3 | 1,323.5 |
| 15 | CHANDERPRABHU JAIN COLLEGE OF HIGHER STUDIES & SCHOOL OF LAW, NEW DELHI | 86.2 | 135.3 | 169.7 | 143.3 | 225.6 | 760.1 | 470.1 | 1,230.2 |
| 16 | UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE OF COMPUTING, CHANDIGARH UNIVERSITY, MOHALI | 145.2 | 186.6 | 196.5 | 143.6 | 215.6 | 887.5 | 326.7 | 1,214.2 |
| 17 | CHITKARA UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE OF ENGINEERING & TECHNOLOGY, PATIALA | 112.1 | 199.6 | 189.1 | 131.9 | 159.4 | 792.1 | 392.3 | 1,184.4 |
| 18 | SCHOOL OF COMPUTING SCIENCE & ENGINEERING, GALGOTIAS UNIVERSITY, GREATER NOIDA | 109.3 | 147.2 | 165.9 | 90.0 | 141.6 | 654.0 | 513.5 | 1,167.5 |
| 19 | JIMS ENGINEERING MANAGEMENT TECHNICAL CAMPUS (JEMTEC), GREATER NOIDA | 119.9 | 137.0 | 158.3 | 106.4 | 203.4 | 725.0 | 421.8 | 1,146.8 |
| 20 | BBK DAV COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, AMRITSAR | 155.2 | 154.0 | 136.5 | 88.4 | 210.5 | 744.6 | 387.5 | 1,132.1 |
| 21 | POST GRADUATE GOVERNMENT COLLEGE FOR GIRLS, CHANDIGARH | 141.7 | 170.0 | 157.6 | 121.4 | 189.2 | 779.9 | 339.5 | 1,119.4 |
| 22 | DAV COLLEGE, ABOHAR, PUNJAB | 144.0 | 195.3 | 163.2 | 121.9 | 164.1 | 788.5 | 265.5 | 1,054.0 |
| 23 | PUNJAB COLLEGE OF TECHNICAL EDUCATION, LUDHIANA | 123.1 | 156.0 | 161.0 | 135.4 | 182.2 | 757.7 | 290.2 | 1,047.9 |
| 24 | SCHOOL OF COMPUTER & SYSTEMS SCIENCES, JAIPUR NATIONAL UNIVERSITY, JAIPUR | 124.4 | 187.0 | 179.8 | 135.9 | 220.9 | 848.0 | 187.1 | 1,035.1 |
| 25 | ST. WILFRED'S P.G. COLLEGE, JAIPUR | 129.2 | 189.2 | 175.2 | 101.3 | 202.4 | 797.3 | 148.7 | 946.0 |
| 26 | AXIS INSTITUTE OF HIGHER EDUCATION, KANPUR | 112.5 | 135.3 | 161.0 | 88.7 | 199.9 | 697.4 | 227.5 | 924.9 |
| 27 | PODDAR INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE, JAIPUR | 129.9 | 199.7 | 168.0 | 148.9 | 161.0 | 807.5 | 104.2 | 911.7 |
| 28 | DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER SCIENCE AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY, IIS (DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY), JAIPUR | 149.8 | 182.9 | 194.8 | 119.1 | 189.0 | 835.6 | 68.9 | 904.5 |
| 29 | AMRAPALI INSTITUTE OF APPLIED SCIENCE, HALDWANI | 101.9 | 162.0 | 173.9 | 94.8 | 216.1 | 748.7 | 154.0 | 902.7 |
| 30 | APEEJAY COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS, JALANDHAR | 136.4 | 195.9 | 135.2 | 144.6 | 161.8 | 773.9 | 117.5 | 891.4 |
| 31 | UTTARANCHAL INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT, DEHRADUN | 110.0 | 166.7 | 177.8 | 119.3 | 216.7 | 790.5 | 100.4 | 890.9 |
| 32 | PSIT COLLEGE OF HIGHER EDUCATION, KANPUR | 126.9 | 168.1 | 171.1 | 75.8 | 199.2 | 741.1 | 116.4 | 857.5 |
| 33 | DAV CENTENARY COLLEGE, FARIDABAD | 133.9 | 159.1 | 83.2 | 89.3 | 182.7 | 648.2 | 206.1 | 854.3 |
| 34 | DEVKI DEVI JAIN MEMORIAL COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, LUDHIANA | 138.0 | 120.6 | 104.1 | 64.3 | 144.7 | 571.7 | 120.6 | 692.3 |
| 35 | LAL BAHADUR SHASTRI PG COLLEGE, JAIPUR | 111.7 | 141.2 | 104.6 | 95.4 | 185.1 | 638.0 | 0.0 | 638.0 |
| 36 | JAGDISH CHANDRA DAV COLLEGE, DASUYA, PUNJAB | 128.6 | 137.3 | 114.1 | 78.4 | 114.0 | 572.4 | 9.7 | 582.1 |
| 37 | PARISHKAR COLLEGE OF GLOBAL EXCELLENCE, JAIPUR | 122.8 | 138.1 | 78.9 | 91.4 | 129.3 | 560.5 | 4.6 | 565.1 |
| 38 | PT. DEEN DAYAL UPADHYAY MANAGEMENT COLLEGE, MEERUT | 75.8 | 114.4 | 50.2 | 38.4 | 176.6 | 455.4 | 99.9 | 555.3 |
| 39 | BEBE NANAKI UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, KAPURTHALA, PUNJAB | 96.4 | 78.5 | 85.8 | 25.2 | 17.2 | 303.1 | 0.0 | 303.1 |

*1. Rankings are based on objective data & perceptual survey data*
*2. Only colleges that submitted their objective data have been ranked.*
*3. Only colleges that fulfilled the below criteria were considered eligible for participation in the ranking: minimum three batches passed out; offering full-time undergraduate (UG) programme*
*4. All scores rounded off to one decimal place; this may result in rounding off errors while adding the parameter-wise score*
*5. Colleges not ranked during perceptual survey have got 0 marks in perceptual score*

# BACK TO SCHOOL

## PARENTS AND EDUCATORS FACE MYRIAD CHALLENGES AS SCHOOLS BEGIN TO REOPEN

**By Shelly Anand**

ANI

Raghav Kapoor (name changed on request), had initially enjoyed attending online classes after schools went virtual in March 2020. Six months in, though, the Class 8 student from Mumbai started feeling the brunt of this new method of learning. His concentration levels began waning and, at one point, he simply lost the motivation to study. Moreover, unable to meet his classmates and friends, he started showing signs of mild depression.

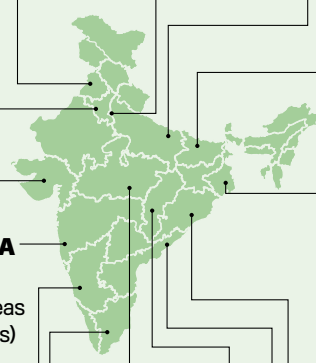
Stories like Raghav's led educational experts, parents and government bodies to urgently debate the reopening of schools. The months of isolation had deepened the realisation that school is also about hanging out with friends and peers and having face-to-face interactions with teachers. "Virtual learning is filling the gap of 'no learning', but we need to get back to physical school soon," says Swati Popat Vats, president of both Podar Education Network, Mumbai, and of the Early Childhood Association, an organisation that brings together professionals in the field of early childhood education. "Also, the 'digital divide' between private and government schools has put government school children at a major disadvantage and this needs to be remedied as soon as possible."

In a recent meta-analysis, carried out by the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), of 15 studies across 10 countries involving 22,996 children/ adolescents, it was reported that the behaviour/ psychological state of 79.4 per cent of the children studied had been affected negatively by the pandemic and the resulting quarantine; at least 22.5 per cent of the children had a significant fear of Covid; 35.2 per cent complained of boredom; and 21.3 per cent had experienced sleep disturbances. Rekha Krishnan, principal of Vasant Valley School, Delhi, says, "It is almost impossible to accept that the children who joined us in 2020 only know their classmates as boxes on a screen. They have not had the opportunity to meet with them socially or interact with them

**< DISTANCE LEARNING** Students at a school in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, stand in line for a temperature check

## IN SESSION

Many states have begun conducting in-person teaching for some of the senior classes



**PUNJAB**
**Since July 26**
(Classes 10, 11, 12)

**HARYANA**
**Since July 16**
(Classes 9 to 12)

**GUJARAT**
**Since July 15**
(Class 12)

**MAHARASHTRA**
**Since Aug. 17**
(Classes 8-12 in areas with no Covid cases)

**KARNATAKA**
**Since Aug. 23**
(Classes 9-12)

**TAMIL NADU**
**Since Sept. 1**
(Classes 9-12, at 50% capacity)

**DELHI**
**Since Aug. 9**
(Classes 10-12 to attend school for guidance)

**MADHYA PRADESH**
**Since July 26**
(Classes 11-12)

**CHHATTISGARH**
**Since Aug. 2**
(Class 12)

**UTTAR PRADESH**
**Since Aug. 16**
(at 50% capacity for all classes)

**BIHAR**
**Since July 26**
(Classes 10 & 12)

**WEST BENGAL**
**Post-Nov.**
(on alternate days for all classes)

**ODISHA**
**Since July 26**
(Classes 10 & 12)

**ANDHRA PRADESH**
**Since Aug. 16**
(for all classes)

*Graphic by* TANMOY CHAKRABORTY

through play. The outcome of this prolonged closure of schools is neither positive nor beneficial for our children and it will be many years before we truly understand and unpack its impact."

Parents have mixed feelings about the reopening of schools. While working parents are ready to send their children back to school, those with domestic support systems for their children remain reluctant. Some parents, like Gursimran Mann, a Delhi-based entrepreneur and mother to two daughters aged five and under, believe the decision to send children back to school needs to be based on the health infrastructure available to them. "Our children's education and lives are top priority. Many believe that if malls can be reopened, so can schools. However, safety is paramount. Do we have an adequate healthcare infrastructure for our children should an outbreak stem from class-

rooms?" In Delhi, schools reopened for classes 9 to 12 from September 1, albeit at 50 per cent capacity.

## The dual problem

Parents are grappling with two sets of health concerns—for the child's own safety and wellbeing and for those at home. A study published on August 18 in the medical journal *JAMA Pediatrics*, which looked at 6,280 households with a Covid case each, found that the risk of the Covid virus being transmitted to those at home via children in the 0-3 years age group was 43 per cent higher, than it was with children in the 14-17 years age group. "Many families worry that their child could transmit the virus to other household members who may be in the highly vulnerable category, like the elderly or those with comorbid conditions. Two doses of a vaccine will reduce this risk significantly," says Dr Sandeep Budhiraja, group medical director, Max Healthcare.

Children themselves are less at risk of death due to Covid. As per the data released by the ministry of health and family welfare (MoHFW), only 1 per cent of all who have died due to Covid in India were below the age of 17. In comparison, 88 per cent of all hospitalised Covid patients who died were above the age of 45. About 40 per cent of children (below the age of 10, excluding neonates) who died had comorbidities and 9 per cent of all hospitalised Covid-positive children presented with severe disease.

There has been an uptick in child Covid hospitalisations around the world, particularly in the US where the delta variant has been spreading. In India, children between 0-10 years accounted for roughly 3 per cent of all cases in both waves. In some districts, the rate of infection being reported among children is now higher with more and more adults getting vaccinated—9,000 children tested positive in Maharashtra's Ahmednagar district in July 2021, accounting for 10 per cent of all cases there, although 95 per cent of the cases were asymptomatic and did not require hospitalisation.

The most common symptoms of child Covid remains mild fever and cough, with a large percentage continuing to remain asymptomatic. According to an August 2021 study of 250,000 children in the UK, published in the medical journal *The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health*, most children who develop symptoms begin recovering after six days and the number who experience symptoms beyond four weeks is low.

The real worry, though, is what is increasingly happening to children after Covid has subsided. "The risk of mortality is low [among children, as compared to adults], but existing evidence suggests that those with underlying health issues could be at greater risk of developing severe symptoms or inflammatory syndrome post-recovery," says Dr Jesal Sheth, a paediatrician at Fortis Hospital, Mumbai. "Multisystem inflammatory syndrome in children (MIS-C) develops after four to six weeks of testing negative. This can also happen to asymptomatic children, so parents are getting alarmed that their child is falling sick suddenly with multi-organ inflammation despite testing negative for Covid," says Dr Sheth. Figures released by the Indian Academy of Pediatric Intensive Care Chapter show that more than 2,000 cases of MIS-C have been reported in India. In about 60 per cent of these cases, the inflammation impacted the heart. "In children, Covid is generally self-limiting.

ANI

**Bindu Balakrishnan, 42**
*Content writer and homemaker, Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh*

"Our two children, son Shivansh Sachdeva (15) and daughter Sainoor Sachdeva (11), are students of Billabong High International School, Noida, and have been learning online since last year. Initially things were difficult for them and there were issues, such as coordinating with teachers, keeping pace with online classes and studying, besides dealing with technical glitches. But over a period of time, things improved and they adjusted to the situation.

They definitely miss interacting with their peers though. Children learn better when they are in a group of like-minded individuals. Sitting in front of a computer screen is monotonous and their attention span is low. Both of them miss their friends, their friendly banter and their activity classes. They are very keen to get back to school."

**—As told to Shelly Anand**

**< SWEET WELCOME**
A teacher in a Bengaluru school gives a student a rose on her first day back

But parents still need to keep an eye on symptoms even after recovery for a few weeks," adds Dr Budhiraja.

As far as vaccinating children is concerned, trials are ongoing and as of July 21, Zydus' three-dose DNA vaccine received approval for emergency use for those between 12-18 years of age. It is a needle-free dose designed for young children and offers 66 per cent efficacy against Covid. This certainly offers more hope for a speedy and safe reopening of offline classes.

## What can schools do?

Reopening of schools cannot be based on frustration and impatience or on the models adopted by other countries or states. It should be a calculated decision based on the circumstances of the neighbourhood, the city and should be done in consultation with doctors, parents, teachers and students. "It's like walking a tight rope," says Krishnan of Vasant Valley School. "Creating safe physical spaces and establishing safety protocol is a given, as is training the people concerned who will be using these spaces. As an educator, I feel, we should not take a decision for the entire city for reopening of schools, but instead base it on the conditions in each neighbourhood."

Among the many things schools need to consider is the test positivity rate in their neighbourhood or zone. Apart from this, they need to put in place social distancing norms, testing facilities within schools, facilities for conducting hybrid classes in the schools and to ascertain the vaccination status of all teachers and staff members.

Another measure that should be adopted is the "bubble" concept to avoid mixing of children and for easy quarantining in case of infection. "In this concept, there will be 10 to 12 children and four adults in a bubble and they will always be together for all activities in school," explains Vats. "There will be no mixing of bubbles, so in case anyone from one bubble gets infected, people in that bubble will be quarantined. The bubbles will use different areas of the school on different days as per the timetable. Daily sanitisation of all toys and equipment and ensuring that soft toys or library books are not shared by two children will be an important part of the safety protocol." These measures feature in the document, titled *Post-Covid Guidelines for Reopening of Preschools and Day Cares,* devised by the Early Childhood Association and Association for Primary Education and Research.

The Heritage Xperiential Learning School, Gurgaon, has been ready to reopen with defined protocols and standard operating procedures since January 2021. Their safety protocol includes temperature checks for all visitors, regular sanitisation of the school campus, compulsory maintenance of social distancing and wearing of masks at all times. All students and teachers have been instructed to inform the school and not attend if they are feeling unwell. Neena Kaul, principal, Heritage Xperiential Learning School, says, "We have been in constant conversation with the parents and have also done online surveys on their interest in sending students to school. A majority have given us consent."

Orchids The International School in Sahakar Nagar, Bengaluru, opened up for in-person classes on August 23. "We opened up for class 10 and the first day of reopening saw an attendance of 35 per cent from students coming in to attend offline classes," says Nancy Syntika, principal. "Before reopening, we ensured that all safety measures—temperature screening at the main entrance, sanitiser stands outside each classroom and sanitisation of the entire campus—were in place. The classrooms have been equipped with fibre shield fitted tables. We also got foot pedals fitted in washrooms."

> AMONG THE MANY THINGS SCHOOLS NEED TO CONSIDER BEFORE REOPENING IS THE TEST POSITIVITY RATE IN THEIR NEIGHBOURHOOD OR ZONE

It would be wrong to assume, though, that schools would be able to go back to their pre-pandemic models anytime soon. They will need to take small steps and follow a combination of online and in-person schooling. Says Krishnan, "Schools will need to include the Hyflex model (with some students physically present in class, while some join in virtually) of learning and use synchronous and asynchronous learning models." Countries often cited as examples for where schools have reopened safely also meet other pre-conditions, such as high levels of vaccination, aggressive testing, large investments in upgrading ventilation systems and a well-thought out Covid procedure. India needs to consider these factors too.

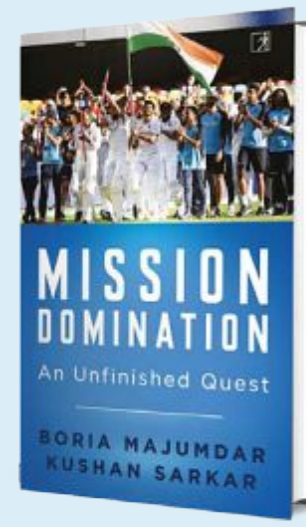
"Is the choice really between opening schools or having our children disadvantaged from a learning standpoint?" asks Mann. "As adults, we have a responsibility to help shape how our children view this unprecedented time in their lives. We should focus on what we can do and what is within our control." That would mean viewing technology as a constantly evolving, enabling tool and not as a stop-gap measure. Technology might seem limited to Zoom classes in today's context, but it doesn't have to be that way. The only way forward is flexibility and adaptability with synchronous learning being balanced with asynchronous learning, and in-person classes with hybrid models of learning. There can be no one model that works for all. ■

**–with Sonali Acharjee**

# UNFINISHED BUSINESS

A NEW BOOK ON **INDIA'S QUEST TO DOMINATE WORLD CRICKET** SUGGESTS THAT COACH RAVI SHASTRI MAY BE THE X-FACTOR IN THE NATIONAL SIDE'S RECENT–AND FUTURE–SUCCESS. EXCERPTS

**BY BORIA MAJUMDAR AND KUSHAN SARKAR**




**MISSION DOMINATION**
**An Unfinished Quest**
*By Boria Majumdar and Kushan Sarkar*
SIMON & SCHUSTER INDIA
**₹400; 242 pages**

**TO OPT FOR RAVINDRA JADEJA** as Virat Kohli's replacement (after the Adelaide Test in December 2020) was considered preposterous by a section of the pundits. A failed experiment, and it could have cost Ravi [Shastri] and [Bharat] Arun their jobs. 36 all out followed by some failed bold calls was the worst result for Indian cricket going into 2021.

"It was Ravi's idea. First, Jadeja has hugely improved as a batsman in the last two years, and if you had seen him bat at the nets, you would know he was full of confidence and ready to go. In fact, if you look at his batting average in Test cricket over the last two years, it is the highest among the all-rounders playing the game at the moment," said Arun.

In Adelaide, every Indian batsman had been a right-hander, something Shastri felt had helped the Australian bowlers settle into a nice rhythm. "Once they got it right, they could just keep hitting the same areas without having to do anything different. There was a degree of sameness in the Indian batting order, and for a bowling attack as good as one comprising Cummins, Hazelwood and Starc, it wasn't much of an issue to do the same thing repeatedly. The fielding set-up could also remain the same and we could not make them think or do anything different," argued Arun.

That's when Shastri came up with the idea. By including Jadeja and Pant in place of Virat and Saha, India added two left-handers for two right-handers, which meant the bowlers would have to vary their line and length continuously against multiple left–right combinations. "A left-hander always scores faster, and both Jadeja and Pant are stroke-makers, which meant they wouldn't get stuck. And with a left–right combination, it is always easier for the right-hander to score as well. The moment bowlers are forced to change their lines, there are more loose balls on offer, and that helps reduce the pressure on the right-handers as well," said fielding coach Sridhar.

> **IF SHASTRI HELPS INDIA WIN THE T-20 WORLD CUP AT HOME, HE WILL HAVE CREATED A LEGACY THAT WILL BE VERY DIFFICULT TO MATCH**

"Ravi was clear we had to make the Australians think different and that the defeat in Adelaide was not something we would hold onto. If you remember, we had dominated the first two days of the Adelaide Test match and one bad hour did not make us a bad team. It was important that we remained positive, and the inclusion of Jadeja and Pant was aimed at convey-

PAUL CHILDS /REUTERS

**DYNAMIC DUO** Virat Kohli (left) with India coach Ravi Shastri at Lords, London, on August 7, 2018

ing the message that we were there to win, not just compete," he added. Jadeja's ability with the ball was a bonus. He can exercise control and is the perfect bowler to go to if one of the fast bowlers needs a break. And if there is the slightest assistance from the wicket, Jadeja will exploit it and chip in with important wickets. "Even in Melbourne, in the Australian first innings, he bowled with control. That's a special ability," says Arun before adding, "with Jadeja there is also always his fielding, which can make a real difference at important points in the game.... Every one of us who watched Jadeja bat with Ajinkya Rahane at the MCG was highly impressed by his temperament and commitment. In fact, it was this partnership that in many ways won India the game. Clearly, Shastri had hit a jackpot with the decision to replace Kohli with Jadeja in Melbourne.

## TERRIBLY TROLLED

Yet, Ravi Shastri is more trolled than admired. It is almost fashionable to attack him and deny credit due to him.

Shastri, it is important to state, is no Anil Kumble. He isn't the most reserved person, and nor is he known to be politically correct. He loves his drink and is flamboyant. But what he has done or is doing is good for the Indian team. And that is what matters in the end.

Shastri, some have suggested, is only a "yes man" to Kohli. The truth is profoundly different. He is an excellent man manager and unlike Kohli, the super-talented superhero, Shastri was a limited player with a huge heart. And that's what he has brought to the Indian dressing room. 'Fearless' is a term much used in Indian cricket of late, and it is a word that best defines Ravi Shastri's philosophy.

Despite all the criticism he receives for his bluster, Ravi Shastri is the man for the job. The captain and the players are comfortable in his presence and that's what makes the Indian changing room what it is at the moment.

India is going into the World Cup on home soil as favourites and Shastri, in no small measure, deserves credit. ■

INDIA TODAY e-mind rocks YOUTH SUMMIT 2021

# A NEW THINKING

**At the India Today E-Mind Rocks 2021, held virtually for the second time, speakers and celebrities from all walks of life came together to reflect on the year gone by but also to discuss how to forge ahead in a new, post-pandemic India**

"The experience of Covid was personal. My mother and I were sick and I understood how harsh the pandemic can be.... I started the relief work because of my difficult personal experience and I feel it helped me heal sooner"

**BHUMI PEDNEKAR**
*Actor*

"I find inspiration in different fields. I don't limit myself as an artist. I get influenced by a lot of things—music, politics"

**RAHUL VAIDYA**
*Singer & Composer*

"I made 16 films in the past 10 years, but I didn't take out enough time for my own mental and physical health. Going forward, I would like to change that"

**ARJUN KAPOOR**
*Actor*

"It is an exciting time to be doing films in Malayalam. The audience here appreciates quality work and is always up for experimenting"

**ROSHAN MATHEW**
*Actor*

MANDAR DEODHAR

"Most athletes come from middle-class families who can't afford to pursue sports. All we can do is put in hard work. But there have been a lot of improvements—more stadiums, better facilities"

**NEERAJ CHOPRA**
*Athlete, Olympic Gold Medalist*

SANJEEV VERMA/GETTY IMAGES

**"I don't call myself an outsider anymore. I am a part of the film industry. I have created a space of my own. I feel at home here"**

**KRITI SANON**
*Actor*

MILIND SHELTE

**"The pandemic has led to new ways of innovative learning and allowed us to reflect on where we are and where we want to be in the future"**

**DHARMENDRA PRADHAN**
*Union Minister of Education*

RACHIT GOSWAMI

MILIND SHELTE

**"As an actor, I believe in self-censorship. My job as an actor is to look at my role, my scenes, not the entire show"**

**PANKAJ TRIPATHI**
*Actor*

"No matter what kind of game you're playing—be it *Battlegrounds* or *FIFA*—there should be a charm in your personality and gameplay"

**AADITYA D. SAWANT (DYNAMO)**
*Gamer, Streamer & Content Creator*

"Gaming is going to be a part of the 2022 Asian Games. We have embarked on a journey where this is going to have a lot of momentum"

**VINIT KARNIK**
*South Asia Head, sports, e-sports and entertainment, GroupM*

"In my mind, when you do something impactful, money comes. Always be inspired to be part of a new creation and build something that can last for a long time"

**SUJEET KUMAR**
*Founder, Udaan*

"I was desperate to get out of radio.... That's how YouTube started for me, because I did not have an option, but I think this was the best decision"

**PRAJAKTA KOLI**
*YouTuber & Actor*

"Our syllabus and history text need to change; the way we teach science needs to change. We need to teach our own traditions first before teaching western traditions"

**AMISH TRIPATHI**
*Author*

"YouTube is a very different game than Instagram. I have changed during the pandemic. The way I see my content and channel has also changed"

**CARRY MINATI**
*YouTuber*

BOLLYWOOD, SHE WROTE
PG 73

INDIAN CINEMA'S BABURNAMA
PG 77

# LEISURE

ANTHOLOGIES: COMING UP SHORT
PG 74

Q&A WITH MANPREET SINGH
PG 80

**Konkona Sensharma** will next be seen in the show Mumbai Diaries 26/11, streaming on Amazon Prime Video from Sept. 9

ENTERTAINMENT

## EVERY WOMAN

THOUGH SHE WILL NEXT BE SEEN IN A THRILLER, THERE IS NO GENRE **KONKONA SENSHARMA** HASN'T MADE HER OWN

**THE ARTIST** Konkona Sensharma in *Mumbai Diaries 26/11*

Konkona Sensharma's honesty shines through, even in conversations that last just 18 minutes. "Of the 50 films I have done, only 15 are worth watching," she says. Talking about her web series debut, the Amazon Prime Video show *Mumbai Diaries 26/11* (streaming from September 9), the two-time National Award-winning actress says that more than the part, it was the "engaging, page-turner" of a script which drew her to the thriller. "Scripts are not always like that. I have had a fair share which are boring and difficult to get through." To play a social services director at a government hospital which comes under a terrorist attack, she admits, didn't require her "to do a whole lot of research". This candour then often translates into a dogged sincerity, one that makes her a favourite among directors.

Alankrita Shrivastava is one such filmmaker. Having collaborated with Sensharma for two of her films, *Lipstick Under My Burkha* (2016) and *Dolly Kitty aur Woh Chamakte Sitaare* (2019), the filmmaker is taken by how much the actress preps for a part: "She gives you so much." Like Sensharma's family and friends, Shrivastava refers to the actress as "Koko". "Koko captures so many things just with the movement of her eyes," she says. "She is genuinely a very independent-minded artist. If I was told there is one actor you will have to make all your films with, I would blindly choose her. She can do anything."

Over the course of two decades, Sensharma has demonstrated a versatility that lets her seamlessly fit into disparate worlds. She has been part of Madhur Bhandarkar films—*Page 3* (2005), *Traffic Signal* (2007)—and done comedies like *Dil Kabaddi* (2008) and *Atithi Tum Kab Jaoge?* (2010). She has been part of big studio films—Excel Entertainment's *Luck By Chance* (2009), Dharma Productions' *Wake Up Sid!* (2009) and Yash Raj Films' *Laaga Chunari Mein Daag* (2007). But what has got her accolades and acclaim are her nuanced performances in independent films like *Mr & Mrs Iyer* (2002), directed by her mother Aparna Sen, and Meghna Gulzar's crime drama *Talvar* (2015).

It was, perhaps, inevitable that an actress of her calibre would be drawn to the world of streaming platforms, whose formats give talented actors both the time and place to make a lasting impact. That said, her decision to act in *Mumbai Diaries* did surprise the show's co-director Nikhil Advani. "I was scared," Advani told *India Today TV*. "I was like 'we have to write more now that she had said yes'."

For Sensharma, OTT platforms offer her a new flexibility. Now she can do an anthology short ('Geeli Puchhi' in *Ajeeb Dastaans*, 2021) as well as longer format shows like the eight-episode long *Mumbai Diaries: 26/11*. "I have seen such fantastic actors. I don't know if they would have gotten their due in mainstream cinema because there is very little space," she says, referring to the likes of Rasika Dugal, Pratik Gandhi and Shreya Dhanwanthary. "Everybody has work, be it technicians, writers and actors."

Sensharma, too, finds herself more occupied than ever. She is, thankfully, being kept busy by work that speaks to her. "You have to have a good reason to get up and go [to work] every day," says the 41-year-old. "If I don't find it interesting, then it is a waste of time for everyone." Sensharma finished filming her mother's project, *The Rapist*, just before the second Covid wave hit and she will also feature in Aasman Bhardwaj's directorial debut *Kuttey*, alongside Tabu, Arjun Kapoor and Naseeruddin Shah.

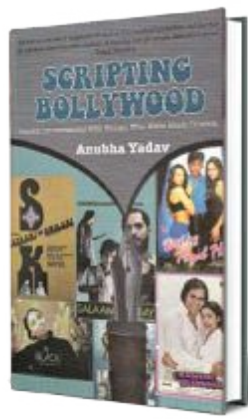
The actress is just as happy behind the camera as she is in front of it. In a development that is sure to thrill admirers of her assured directorial debut *A Death in the Gunj* (2016), Sensharma says she has returned to the writing desk. She is also eager to lend her voice to more audio books. "Reading builds empathy. It enables you to relate to people far removed from you. You are free because it is your voice and not your body," she says. Sensharma hopes to one day read out Vivek Shanbag's *Ghachar Ghochar*. ■

**–Suhani Singh**

**"You have to have a good reason to get up and go [to work] every day. If I don't find [a script] interesting, then it is a waste of time for everyone"**

# BOLLYWOOD, SHE WROTE

**Anubha Yadav's book shows how women screenwriters in Hindi cinema have been both invaluable and undervalued**




**SCRIPTING BOLLYWOOD**
**Candid Conversations with Women Who Write Hindi Cinema**
*by Anubha Yadav*
WOMEN UNLIMITED
**₹675; 300** pages

**WIELDING THE PEN**
(clockwise from top, left) Filmmakers Honey Irani; Tanuja Chandra; Juhi Chaturvedi; and Sooni Taraporevala

Juhi Chaturvedi says she reads dialogues out loud while writing them: "My staff sometimes comes to my room to check if everything is fine." Shama Zaidi reads big novels non-linearly—"I decide how much I want to read and I read in stages"—and believes a web series can be experienced the same way. Sooni Taraporevala decided to direct the film of her script *Little Zizou* because she wanted to maintain its quirkiness. Screenplay structure is like a petticoat, says Shibani Bathija. Without it, "you will not get the form you need. The sari will fall right off". The late Kalpana Lajmi says she finds depictions of romance in the films of Gulzar and Shyam Benegal dry, and that "there is more *ras* in a woman's gaze".

Little details like these—observations, back-stories, personal whimsies—provide the beating heart of this collection of interviews with 14 women screenwriters. They give *Scripting Bollywood* a free-flowing, unpredictable quality.

This book is a response to two levels of 'invisibilising': the glossing over of a writer's contribution to filmmaking; and the more specific neglect of female writers over the decades. The subjects include veterans like Zaidi and Sai Paranjpye as well as younger writers like Chaturvedi and Devika Bhagat who work in the exciting new worlds of indie films and the web series. All sorts of cinematic idioms are contained here: from "parallel" to 'commercial', from overtly progressive films to ones that get labelled 'problematic' because of their politics.

Yadav invisibilises herself in a sense by presenting the conversations in the 'as told to' format—we get only the voices of the subjects, creating a hushed, intimate, stream-of-consciousness effect. Some writers speak a little more about craft or routines, others focus on formative experiences or influences. Rapports with directors—Urmi Juvekar's work with Dibakar Banerjee, for instance, or Honey Irani's with Yash Chopra or Bathija's with Karan Johar—are discussed in terms of conflict or cooperation. Some see being a woman as central to their experience, others not so much.

There are different perspectives on the female gaze in scriptwriting and insights into the challenges of various periods in film history: there is Kamna Chandra relating how she wrote *Prem Rog* for Raj Kapoor, who made some changes "to suit a more mainstream film"; and then there is Chandra's daughter Tanuja, decades later, writing in the multiplex era or for independent American producers.

Importantly, before moving on to the main interviews, Yadav provides context about some of the women who played key roles as producers, directors, writers, or sometimes all at the same time in the early years of the talking Hindi film—figures like Fatma Begum, Ratan Bai and Jaddan Bai, whose contributions to screenwriting has barely been noted in the historical record. This is also a reminder of the value of the present book—and, hopefully, others that will follow it—as a chronicle of cinema's undervalued creators.■

**–Jai Arjun Singh**

# Coming Up Short

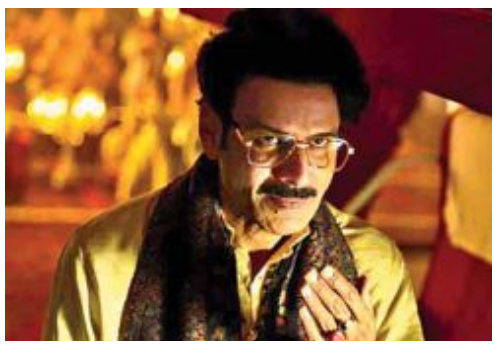
**There are many Netflix anthology films to choose from, but only a few one can get behind**

At the beginning of Karthick Naren's *Project Agni*, the third episode of the new Netflix Tamil-language anthology *Navarasa* (created and co-produced by Mani Ratnam and Jayendra Panchapakesan), a scientist named Vishnu (Arvind Swami) says: "An obsession to see something beyond our intelligence is never a good idea. It will kill you, one way or another." Ironically, *Project Agni* (representing the rasa *adbhutha* or wonder) fails to take its own advice. The story is convoluted and frequently juggles far more themes than it can handle within the 30-minute runtime: aliens, simulation theory, the Frankenstein complex, Hindu apocalyptic fables. The inspirations are painfully obvious; Christopher Nolan is name-checked at one point while the *Matrix* films are alluded to.

Ultimately, *Project Agni's* problem is what ails *Navarasa* as well as Netflix India's anthology projects on the whole: an abundance of style but not nearly enough substance or narrative cohesion. Since 2018 (when Netflix India released its first 'original'), the anthology format has become something of a staple for Netflix's Indian-language programming. But there is a worrying sameness to these projects—*Lust Stories* (2018), *Ghost Stories* (2020), *Pitta Kathalu* (2021), *Ajeeb Dastaans* (2021), *Ray* (2021) et al.

The first and the most important problem with these projects is their superficial, fetishistic understanding of socio-political issues. In the recent anthology *Feels Like Ishq*, there's a story called 'Ishq Mastana' where two 20-somethings fall in love at a protest. Kabir (Skand Thakur) is a 'sports quota' jock who sets up a date with a young, passionate activist called Mehr (Tanya Maniktala). But how exactly does this passion for worthy causes tally with her also planning a date at the protest itself? Why is Kabir so convinced that he will get the no-strings-attached one-night stand he wants with Mehr? The answers 'Ishq Mastana' provides are either perfunctory or deeply condescending, betraying a poor understanding of politically active young people.

Further problems are caused by the unevenness of the writing and over-reliance on genre tropes. Anurag Kashyap's entries in both *Ghost Stories* and *Lust Stories* are terribly written; the former is hamstrung by haphazardly written haunted-house dialogue while the latter features Radhika Apte playing a clichéd, one-note sexually-adventurous older woman. Dibakar Banerjee's zombie fable in *Ghost Stories* is similarly bland and underwhelming. Also, despite an enterprising performance by Manisha Koirala, the love triangle in *Love Stories* feels pointless and severely dated (everything



it had to say about marriage, infidelity and compromise had been said by Neena Gupta's TV show *Saans* in the '90s, and better).

Finally, a lot of these anthology projects are preoccupied with period aesthetics rather than the stories those aesthetic choices are supposed to be a part of. Kashyap's monochrome fixation in *Ghost Stories* is a case in point, as are the stories in *Ray* (an anthology of Satyajit Ray adaptations). Don't get me wrong: it's great that a certain flair and attention to detail are elevating the production design game, but the window dressing only feels impressive if the overall storytelling passes muster (Netflix's own *Bulbbul,* 2020, is a rare example where these aspects work well in tandem).

Other streaming networks have also caught on and tried to create alternatives in this space: towards the end of 2020, Amazon Prime Video released two anthology films set amidst the realities of Covid-19: the Tamil-language *Putham Pudhu Kaalai* and the Hindi-language *Unpaused*. However, both these sets of five shorts were strictly average. The only memorable aspect was an outlier performance or two—Suhasini Maniratnam in the former, Ratna Pathak Shah in the latter.

There are exceptions, of course: the Tamil anthology *Paava Kadhaigal* (2020) featured four hard-hitting stories about how gender and caste are inextricably linked with notions of collective 'honour', and how the female body is the site upon which the worst excesses of such a system are visited. Neeraj Ghaywan's 'Geeli Pucchi' (starring Konkona Sensharma and Aditi Rao Hydari), is tender, poignant and darkly comic. This superbly written story about caste discrimination was far ahead of the pack in *Ajeeb Dastaans*. But these are exceptions that prove the rule, not least because their strengths are what their peers so obviously lack—narrative cohesion, political nous, and a razor-sharp focus on the essentials of the medium.

Netflix is fond of deconstruction: breaking down something demonstrably successful in search of easily replicable parts or components. If they wish to prevent their future anthologies (the next one, *Ankahi Kahaniya*, is releasing September 17) from becoming indistinguishable mediocrities, they should start analysing 'Geeli Pucchi' and *Paava Kadhaigal* posthaste.■

**–Aditya Mani Jha**

(left, from top) Stills from Lust Stories, Ray, Ajeeb Dastaans, Navarasa; (right, from top) Feels Like Ishq and Ghost Stories

## DOING IT RIGHT

Three international anthology films to watch

### TEN YEARS

(Hong Kong, 2015)

This speculative fiction anthology paints a grim picture of Hong Kong under an increasingly draconian Chinese government, circa 2025: a bleak landscape marked by mass surveillance, systemic discrimination and the crushing of dissent

### WILD TALES

(Argentina, 2014)

Tense situations escalate to homicidal proportions in the blink of an eye in director Damián Szifron's collection of six unpredictable, morbid stories about vengeance

### THE BALLAD OF BUSTER SCRUGGS

(US, 2018)

The Coen Brothers' gift for dark comedy and their inimitable, eccentric characters make this collection of six 'Wild West' stories about death and redemption a must-watch

CINEMA

# A HERO'S JOURNEY

**With its large canvas and even larger themes, *The Green Knight* is well worth that trip to the cinema**

In one important sense, David Lowery's *The Green Knight* is an easy film to watch: it is a mesmerising sensory experience, especially on a big screen. The stately compositions and art design, the Irish settings (complemented by some computer-generated imagery), the dark, hushed tone—this adds up to a sweeping canvas that never loses its intimacy.

But in narrative terms, this medieval fantasy is determined not to make it easy for a viewer, even one who is broadly familiar with the Arthurian legends. For instance: early on, you'll see King Arthur, Queen Guinevere, the Round Table, the sword Excalibur and even Merlin the wizard, but the film doesn't underline who they are or give the viewer "Aha!" moments. Also, if you have been molly-coddled by OTT films during the pandemic, consider yourself warned: here be no subtitles. You might feel the need for those, given some of the dense accents and the rune-like chapter heads that appear on screen.

Adapted from a 14th century Chivalric poem, this is the story of Arthur's nephew Gawain (Dev Patel) and his fateful encounter with the mysterious Green Knight. A game of "exchanges" requires that after Gawain has beheaded this tree-like being, the latter will return the favour a year hence. Thus begins a version of the Hero's Journey, with Gawain setting out to meet his nemesis and having a string of strange encounters—including one with the ghost of Saint Winifred, and another with a red fox that might appear sweet until you realise it is CGI.

Without giving away spoilers, *The Green Knight* builds to a moving climax that may remind some viewers of *The Last Temptation of Christ*, or the fables about "*maya*" (illusion) in Indian mythology. By the time Gawain asks someone "Are you certain the Green Chapel is that close?" late in the narrative, we can tell that the Green Knight has a symbolic function in his life. Does Gawain choose a dramatic destiny or a safe one, and is it even possible to make such a choice? Or as another character puts it, "Why greatness? Is goodness not enough?"

These are limited, human-centric themes though. Looked at from the perspective of our altered Covid world, *The Green Knight* also feels like it is about something bigger: our relationship with nature, our destruction of the ecological balance; about the "greenness" we try to bend to our puny wills. If you hack at a green knight's limbs, will it pay you back manifold?

Regardless of how you interpret its meaning, this is a haunting film that rewards more than one viewing—just don't go into it expecting a fast-paced, action-filled adventure. ■

**–Jai Arjun Singh**

Dev Patel (left) as Gawain, King Arthur's nephew, in The Green Knight

(From top) Kunal Kapoor; Dino Morea; Drashti Dhami; and Shabana Azmi in *The Empire*

OTT

# BOLLYWOOD'S BABURNAMA

*Much like its Mughal characters,* The Empire *is both imperfect and compelling*

Hotstar's ambitious new eight-part series *The Empire* (created by Nikkhil Advani and directed by Mitakshara Kumar) starts in medias res, with the Mughal king Babur (Kunal Kapoor) in the thick of his most famous war, the First Battle of Panipat (1526). Kapoor's voice-over tells us that Babur has been "cheating death since he was a 14-year-old boy"; cue the grown-up Babur scything his way through enemy hordes. This turns out to be the first artful misdirection in a story featuring quite a few, for *The Empire's* (based on the *Empire of the Moghul* series by Alex Rutherford) first couple of episodes don't feature a whole lot of Kapoor.

Instead, we stay with the 14-year-old Babur (Mehroos Mir), a boy-emperor on the run from the marauding Uzbek warlord Shaibani Khan (Dino Morea), learning the finer points of warfare from the loyal Wazir Khan (Rahul Dev) and statecraft from his crafty grandmother Esan Dawlat (Shabana Azmi) and sister Khanzada (Drashti Dhami). For the first five episodes, the Shaibani vs Babur clash is the highlight of the show and for the most part it's good, solid, escapist fun.

One would normally expect Azmi to lead the way in an ensemble like this, but it's the rejuvenated Morea who emerges as the undisputed scene-stealer. His Shaibani Khan is gloriously campy, a tinderbox of a villain who wears a clawed knuckle-duster but doesn't really need it to project a sense of power—his eyes, his loping wildebeest's walk and his smarmy dialogue delivery are more than enough. He kills and maims with visible glee but also has a thoughtful side to his character. This is another noteworthy aspect of *The Empire*: it tries not to demonise or caricature Muslims, apart from one gratuitous self-flagellation scene (predictably, since its release, online Hindutva proponents have been trending #BanTheEmpireSeries).

Unfortunately, following the conclusion of the Shaibani storyline, the last three (Panipat-centric) episodes aren't nearly as thrilling. Imaad Shah has his moments as Qasim, confidante and advisor to Babur who is also in a one-sided romantic relationship with the emperor. But beyond that, the casting and make-up are iffy (Babur's queens do not seem to age with the time leap and look younger than their own children), the acting is stiff and, crucially, the battle sequences leave a lot to be desired. If Hotstar wants a piece of that genre-pie, it's going to need considerably superior VFX, because OTT audiences are now used to shows like *Game of Thrones*, where you can see the money well-spent on both practical and computer-generated visual effects.

On the whole, *The Empire* is a praiseworthy attempt at the kind of large-scale swords-and-sultans epic that Bollywood seldom gets right. With the requisite improvements in casting, writing et cetera, it has a real shot at becoming something special in future seasons. ■

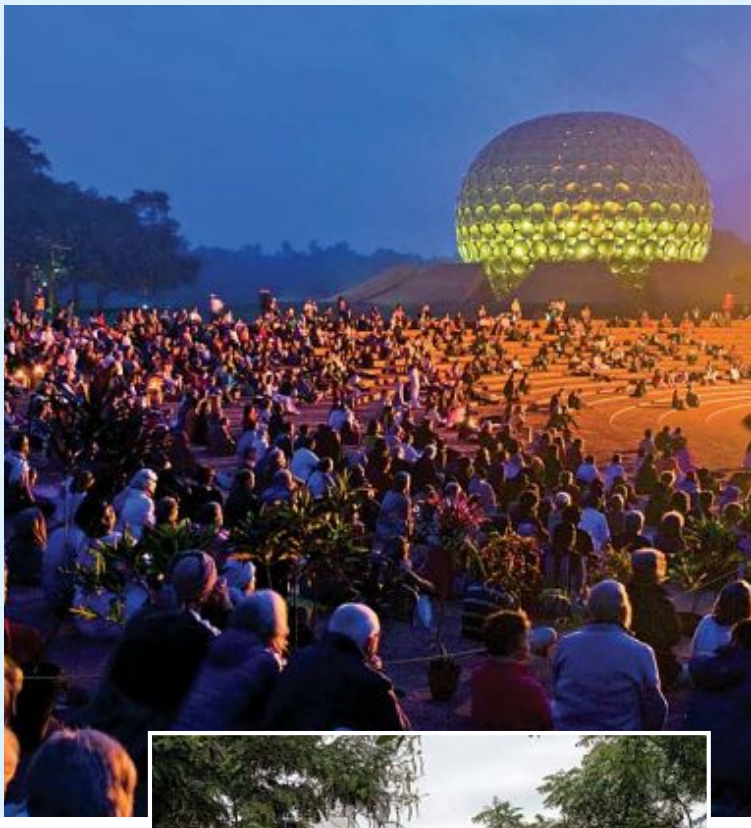
**–Aditya Mani Jha**

BOOKS

# CITY OF RAPTURE

**The story of Auroville's origins, through a tragic personal history**

**AKASH KAPUR**



ALAMY

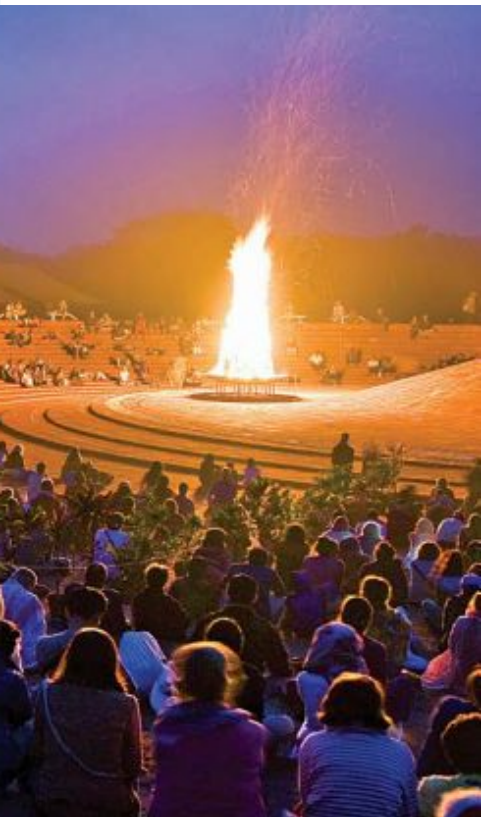
In his first book, *India Becoming,* Akash Kapur used a varied cast of characters, including a cattle broker and call centre worker, to animate the upheavals transforming the country he had returned to from the US. In his second, *Better to Have Gone*, he swaps out his panoramic lens for a more intimate focus: the family album. In this pacey, propulsive book, he turns his attention to the history of the place he and his wife grew up in and now call home: Auroville, the community founded in 1968 in the outskirts of Pondicherry (now Puducherry).

Kapur recounts Auroville's origin story through the entwined lives of three "rebels" who wind up on the same "arid patch of earth" in South India, in search of "a deeper way of living": Satprem, né Bernard, a former French Resistance fighter tortured by the Gestapo, who became the favoured devotee of the mystical matriarch of Auroville, Mirra Alfassa; John Walker, a wealthy American who yearns for non-materialistic meaning; and Diane Maes, a beautiful, free-spirited Belgian and the mother of the author's wife Auralice.

Some have taken issue with Kapur's description of the land that Auroville was built on, a cluster of villages occupied by local Tamils, as "a moonscape: vacant, panoramic" and "a fitting tabula rasa for the new world". In a Twitter thread, Jessica Namakkal, a historian who researches French India, averred that this "new world" was brought into being not so much by the hope and boundless energy of a bunch of

**BETTER TO HAVE GONE: Love, Death and the Quest for Utopia in Auroville**
*by Akash Kapur*
SIMON & SCHUSTER
**₹699; 368** pages

ALAMY



**CITY OF FAITH**
(left) A view of the Matrimandir in Auroville; and Savitri Bhavan, a centre for spiritual education in Auroville

disenchanted dreamers, but by a kind of "settler utopianism" that succeeded colonialism. (The French relinquished their hold on Pondicherry just six years before the founding of Auroville and many, including the Mother and Satprem, found their way there through French government posts.)

Aside from this contextual elision, the author carefully and vividly pieces together Auroville's early years, and how its assemblage of idealistic international inhabitants—memorably described as "idiot savants of endurance"—were spurred by Sri Aurobindo's teachings and the Mother's lofty directives that Auroville be "the first city of the future" and "a Tower of Babel in reverse", with its children serving as "'intermediary beings' to a more evolved form of life". But the early Aurovilians' treatment of these intermediary beings could best be characterised as benignly neglectful, with some left alone to be bitten by vipers (like Auralice's brother) or drowned in wells (also Auralice's brother). Nonetheless, the book depicts the heady early days of the intentional community, when its first inhabitants, variously described as "poets", "hippies" and "self-taught ecologists", lived in spartan huts, faced off against "bandicoots, bugs, thieves, cobras, dysentery, kraits and pneumonia", and kept "digging, building, planting, cutting, damming, watering and baking" with "almost lunatic" stubbornness, eventually transforming a denuded landscape into a forest dotted with farms, a school, a health centre, a bakery, small businesses, and a number of thriving communities.

All this is a picturesque backdrop to the core of the book: the doomed love story involving Diane and John, Auralice's mother and stepfather. The catalyst for this tragedy is the death of the Mother and the rumours she set in motion, through Satprem, that cultivating a "supramental consciousness" would prompt a "cellular evolution", enabling her to achieve immortality even after everyone mistook her for dead. With hypnotic clarity, Kapur shows how this belief in the miraculous powers of "the Mother's yoga" to conquer death and infirmity led the couple to entirely avoidable doom. But Kapur leaves much of this cultic in-group language—talk of "formations", exhausted karma, and references to the way of the yoga—largely unmediated. The reader is left to extract another story from this one—one where spiritual wisdom is indistinguishable from dangerous delusion and faith from self-annihilating credulousness. This is understandable; his motivation, as he shares in the book, is catharsis for his wife Auralice, who left Auroville as a teenager with "so much unprocessed". "We are shining a light on hidden places, and we are doing it together". At least one love story in Kapur's book has a happy ending. ■

**- Shruti Ravindran**

## *S(H)ELF LIFE*

*New books written from a first-person perspective*

**FRAGMENTS AGAINST MY RUIN: A Life**
*by Farrukh Dhondy*
CONTEXT
**₹699; 312** pages

Farrukh Dhondy wears many hats—TV celebrity, writer, leftist, Parsi boy. His friends list, too, is diverse. Everyone from Charles Sobhraj to V. S. Naipaul has been on it. His is a memoir of names, places, things.

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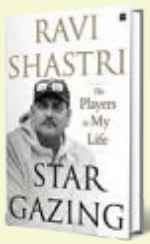
**STARGAZING: The Players In My Life**
*by Ravi Shastri*
HARPERCOLLINS
**₹699; 336** pages




From being a star all-rounder to commentator and then coach, Ravi Shastri has done it all. He writes of extraordinary players he has met, even stopping to separate Virat, the friend, and Kohli, the captain.

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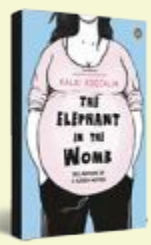


**THE ELEPHANT IN THE WOMB**
*by Kalki Koechlin*
PENGUIN
**₹399; 256** pages

Helped by stunning illustrations, actor Kalki Koechlin's take on motherhood covers all the bases—the toll of pregnancies, labour pain, postpartum melancholy. This is where private meets fiercely political.

# LEADING THE FIELD

Indian men's hockey captain **Manpreet Singh** likes to live life without any regrets. Having led his team to victory in their Olympic bronze medal match, he says he has finally realised a long-cherished dream

**Q. How does it feel to have clinched the Olympic bronze?**
None of the boys from the team were even born when India last bagged a medal in hockey at the Olympics 41 years ago. We had only heard about India winning a medal. So, when we won bronze, it was a very different feeling. There have been so many players before us who were good, but we played well as a team and that's why we managed to win. It was my childhood dream to win an Olympic medal, which has now been fulfilled.

**Q. What did you tell the boys in between your semi-final loss and the third-place game against Germany?**
It was very difficult for everybody when we lost the semi-final. Had we won that match, we would have been assured of a medal, whether silver or gold. It was clear that only a win would help us clinch bronze. I told them that we had 60 minutes and if we played well during this time, we would have a medal against our names. Otherwise, there would be regret.

**Q. What should be done here on to sustain the momentum for Indian hockey?**
India is currently World No. 3, so the idea is to maintain it. We will need to work on the mistakes that we made at the Olympics and figure out the areas where we need improvement. We will analyse these things once back at camp. Of course, the eventual aim is to get to World No. 1.

**Q. Now that you have some time away from training, what have you been enjoying the most?**
Since our return, we have gone to so many felicitation functions. But whenever I have had the opportunity to talk, I tell people of the sacrifices we had made and the hard work we put in to win this medal. I want people to know what the team has done to get here. Also, before the Olympics, fast food and sweets were a no-no. I'm really enjoying these little indulgences today.

—with Shail Desai